

The Forced Evacuation of Cambodia's Cities

**GOLD RUSH AT
REFUGEE CAMPS**



KY: Hitler-loving ex-dictator wows reporters with tent show.

Call for Abortion Pickets at British Embassies

Rosie Douglas: My Fight Against Deportation From Canada

Documents

Discussion With Trotsky on Latin American Questions

NEWS ANALYSIS

The Forced Evacuation of Cambodia's Cities

By Joseph Hansen

Pnompenh fell to the People's National Liberation Armed Forces of Cambodia on April 17, but accounts of what happened did not become available in the world press until May 8. The journalists who witnessed the take-over were barred from sending out dispatches. After reaching Thailand in a convoy of refugees May 3, they agreed to hold up their reports until several hundred additional refugees had crossed the border.

The accounts of the more responsible journalists must be taken as generally accurate, particularly in view of the fact that neither the new Cambodian authorities nor the governments in Hanoi and Peking have issued specific denials.

First of all—and this strengthens their credibility—the reporters deny that any “bloodbath” occurred. They also deny finding any evidence, or being able to locate any eyewitnesses, of the “executions” that the Ford administration claims to have learned about through “hard intelligence,” i.e., the CIA.

A sensationalistic account of atrocities presumably witnessed by Bernard Piquart, who was chief surgeon at the French-run Calmette Hospital in Pnompenh, was denied within a day by the doctor.

There were two take-overs on April 17. The first was carried out early in the morning by a small force led by one Hem Keth Dara. For a few hours he ruled the city as Lon Nol's troops laid down their arms, and the populace, at first fearful, poured into the streets to celebrate the victory.

The holiday mood evaporated when the main forces arrived about noon. They disarmed Hem Keth Dara. In the May 9 issue of the *New York Times*, Sydney H. Schanberg offers a vivid eyewitness account of what happened next:

“Using loudspeakers, or simply shouting and brandishing weapons, they swept through the streets, ordering people out of their houses. At first we thought the order

applied only to the rich in villas, but we quickly saw that it was for everyone as the streets became clogged with a sorrowful exodus.”

“In Phnom Penh two million people suddenly moved out of the city en masse in stunned silence—walking, bicycling, pushing cars that had run out of fuel, covering the roads like a human carpet, bent under sacks of belongings hastily thrown together when the heavily armed peasant soldiers came and told them to leave immediately, everyone dispirited and frightened by the unknown that awaited them and many plainly terrified because they were soft city people and were sure the trip would kill them.

“Hospitals jammed with wounded were emptied, right down to the last patient. They went—limping, crawling, on crutches, carried on relatives' backs, wheeled on their hospital beds. . . .

“A once-thriving city became an echo chamber of silent streets lined with abandoned cars and gaping, empty shops. Streetlights burned eerily for a population that was no longer there.”

Traveling across the country on the way to Thailand, Schanberg noted that other cities and towns had been similarly evacuated. He came to the following conclusion:

“The victorious Cambodian Communists . . . are carrying out a peasant revolution that has thrown the entire country into upheaval.

“Perhaps as many as three or four million people [out of a population of seven million] . . . have been forced out of the cities and sent on a mammoth and grueling exodus into areas deep in the countryside where, the Communists say, they will have to become peasants and till the soil. . . .

“The old economy of the cities has been abandoned, and for the moment money means nothing and cannot be spent. Barter has replaced it.”

For the Washington propagandists, Cambodia's “peasant revolution” was a windfall. They pounced on it. The reactionary columnist William Safire, for instance, said, “. . . this is no Cambodian aberration, but the path always taken by new Communist parties as they take power.” Calling it the “decapitation of a capital city,” he averred that “Communism is by its nature anti-city, anti-civilization, anti-freedom.”

And what precipitated the process that led to these results? It was Nixon's incur-

sion in 1970. B-52s carpet bombed Cambodia. The countryside was cratered. About 600,000 Cambodians were killed. Another 600,000 were wounded. This was the “civilizing mission” directed from Washington, the capital city of the United States.

Is it any wonder that the peasants of Cambodia came to view cities as evil incarnate? Behind those untouchable pilots in the giant bombers who showered their country with fiendishly destructive devices, they saw the city of Washington. And within closer reach they saw the cities and towns where dirty puppets did everything they could to help Washington destroy them and their families.

Despite this completely justifiable hatred of the foreign power that sought to bomb them back to the Stone Age, one of the leaders in the new Information Ministry told Schanberg: “We would like you to give our thanks to the American people who have helped us and supported us from the beginning, and to all people of the world who love peace and justice. Please give this message to the world.”

Evidently the liberation forces are able to distinguish between the White House and the antiwar movement that played such a key role in bringing the imperialist aggression to an end.

The Cambodian people have a right to determine their own fate. This applies just as much after their victory over the foreign imperialist invaders as before. Everyone who has fought for this right must continue to uphold it. We must be particularly alert to any new imperialist attempt to intervene in the internal affairs of the Cambodian people. The slogan remains, “Hands off Cambodia!”

Nonetheless revolutionary Marxists are duty bound to voice their concern over the program that is being followed by the national liberation forces in Cambodia. It is not a communist program.

Consider the class composition of the cities and towns. The very thin layer of capitalists, or would-be capitalists, left Cambodia before the collapse of Lon Nol. About 5,000 or 6,000 persons were involved. While a few individual traitors decided to remain and take their chances, they no longer constitute a serious danger. The fact is that the bulk of the city population in Cambodia consists of workers and artisans and their families.

To view them as potential, if not actual, class enemies is not Marxist. And to drive them into the countryside for “reeducation” does grave injury to the Cambodian revolution. The same layers, in alliance with the peasants, constitute the key force required to move toward a socialist society.

It cannot be excluded, of course, that the new authorities had good reasons for deciding that the first major action following the victory should be the evacuation of

Next Week. . .

“The New Slave Trade.” Sally N'Dongo, leader of the General Union of Senegalese Workers in France, describes exploitation of African workers driven from their native lands by the legacy of imperialism—famine and unemployment. An exclusive *IP* interview.

the cities. Perhaps they will eventually say that a forced march was required to plant crops, or that transport was not available to feed the cities. But this would not explain why the evacuation was ordered in such a summary way on the very day of the victory, or why it was undertaken at such high cost in human suffering. Why wasn't it explained to the populace? Why weren't they given more time? Why weren't they consulted and brought into the planning? Why were they handled like enemies?

The answers are tied in with the pattern of the Cambodian revolution. As in China, the most massive force is composed of rebel peasants. Again as in China, this force created an army in the countryside. The peasant army, in turn, created a command structure. Here we find the key element.

In former times, the commanders led similar peasant armies against a corrupt, decayed regime. Toppling the old regime and carrying out a number of progressive measures permitting a new expansion of agriculture, the army command would mark the beginning of a new dynasty.

This ancient Asian pattern helped shape the revolutionary process that brought Mao to power.

In modern times, of course, the command structure of a peasant army created in this way is subject to international influences that block the old pattern from being merely repeated. In the case of China, it placed in power a Chinese variant of Stalinist bureaucratism. What the outcome will be in Cambodia remains to be seen.

The degree of influence Hanoi and Peking may have with the new authorities in Cambodia is not clear. Moscow's standing is very low. A rocket was fired through the Soviet embassy in Pnompenh, the building was looted, and the seven Russians there were ordered to leave the country with the final convoys of foreigners.

On May 11 the Pnompenh radio said: "The victory of the Cambodian people is the same as the victory of the Chinese. The strategic unity between Cambodia and China, which is the base of our friendship, will last forever. We warmly respect each other's cause both internally and internationally."

The decision of the Cambodians to evacuate the cities may have been done in emulation of the Maoists, who have sent hundreds of thousands of dissidents or potential dissidents, particularly among the youth, into the countryside for "reeducation." Does Peking consider the Cambodians to have been overzealous? So far the writers for Hsinhua have maintained a discreet silence.

The lineaments of the Cambodian revolution are beginning to emerge. It should not take long until a more concrete assessment can be made. However, it is still too early to accurately forecast its coming stages. □

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Editor: Joseph Hansen.
Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.
Editorial Staff: Michael Baumann, Gerry Foley, Ernest Harsch, Judy White.
Business Manager: Reba Hansen.
Assistant Business Manager: Steven Warshell.
Copy Editor: Mary Roche.
Technical Staff: Bill Burton, James M. Morgan, Earl Williams.

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Ford's Last 'Humanitarian' Vietnam Mission Runs Into Flak

By Peter Green

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. . . ."

These words are part of the inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor. Ford referred to the "philosophy symbolized" in that statue in appealing May 1 for more money to cover the cost of bringing in refugees from Vietnam.

Ford's view of the "poor" and of "huddled masses" hardly corresponded with the reality.

Torturers, policemen, and murderers trooped off the planes. Guards of the tiger cage prisons as well as the powerful generals and their bagmen were there. Also present were the corrupt officials and politicians who diverted huge sums from the billions of American dollars poured into Saigon.

"I had been expecting people with tattered, torn clothing and the marks of battle," said a marine watching them arrive in California, "but you just don't see that."

One of the refugees was Hong Van Hoanh, "a dapper man of prominence, prestige and privilege," reported a *New York Times* correspondent.

"With a thriving business, a young wife, a dozen children, two large houses, four cars and seven servants, he was the envy of his neighbors and a prince among his peers."

Another of the arrivals in search of a "new life" was Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Manh. He landed by helicopter on a navy evacuation ship "accompanied by two aides who were straining under the weight of their attaché cases," said *Newsweek* correspondent Ron Moreau. "When the ship's security officers took a look into the cases, they found them to be loaded with gold bars."

"Refugees" such as these appear to be acclimatizing well. An airline employee told the *Los Angeles Times* that a young Vietnamese woman had bought six tickets for a weekend in Las Vegas—and paid for them in crisp \$20 bills. He estimated she had about \$10,000 in U.S. currency in her purse.

Former puppet Premier Nguyen Cao Ky was one of the most prominent rats. He quickly put on a publicity show to help out his friends in Washington, who have been getting a bad press over the defeat they suffered in Vietnam.

A group of reporters found their way to

this "flamboyant little dictator" now at Camp Pendleton in California. He was warming his hands over a trash fire burning in a blackened corrugated barrel. He still wore his lavender scarf, but his twin pearl-handled revolvers were gone. Interviewed in 1965, Ky had said that he had only one hero, Hitler, and that what was needed to save Vietnam were four or five Hitlers. Interviewed on May 6, however, he was playing the part of a man of the people:

"I'm going through normal procedure," he told reporters.

"See," he said, pulling back the flap door of his tent, "I'm staying here just like anybody else." Ky said he was looking for a sponsor who would help him set up as a farmer. He said he had given up an earlier plan to become a taxicab driver.

"It was good theater, according to some of the Vietnamese refugees who observed Mr. Ky's first hours here," reported Jon Nordheimer in the May 7 *New York Times*. "However, they were not entirely convinced when he said he was without significant funds or influence or that he looked forward to life in America as a cab driver or farmer."

Ky's act was marred a bit by the VIP treatment that his wife and her party of fifteen received when they arrived in Hawaii several days earlier. Included in the baggage she brought with her from Saigon were three automobiles. Ky's "normal procedure" did not begin immediately either. When he arrived on the command ship *Blue Ridge* after the final helicopter evacuation from Saigon, he was installed, under guard, in a private stateroom.

Not everyone was taken in by Ky's theater. A small task force of Swiss-American bullion dealers flew to Fort Smith, Arkansas. They said they had come to help relieve the Vietnamese of what are believed to be "considerable amounts" of gold bars, gold coins, and gold dust.

"We have been told by the State Department that many of the people coming here have brought out lots of gold and foreign exchange," said one of the dealers. "We are (here) to buy it from them—and make some money for the company as well."

A Gallup poll released May 1 found that only 36 percent of those interviewed favored allowing the Vietnamese to stay in the United States, while 54 percent said they should be kept out.

Many Americans recognize the "refu-

gees" for what they are and want nothing to do with them. "These people that have got the dough and have been selling heroin for the last 10 years, I say no," was the reaction of a Los Angeles woman. "I don't want these people that shove women and children off planes."

Also involved are racist attitudes fostered by the government itself: both the virulent anti-Asian racism encouraged by a war of annihilation against the "gooks" and "slopeheads"; and anti-"alien" racism based on making foreign-born workers the scapegoats for unemployment.

Just outside the huge Eglin Air Force Base in Florida where many of the refugees are to be housed, the small town of Niceville was up in arms about them. A petition asking that the refugees be placed elsewhere was circulated. Children in one local school joked about shooting a few of the refugees.

"There's no telling what kind of diseases they'll be bringing with them," said the manager of the American Opinion Bookstore, a franchised operation of the John Birch Society.

At the nearby Fort Walton Beach High School, students talked about organizing a "gook klux klan." One class said they were afraid the refugees would try to convert them to Communism.

"But they're not Communists," one student argued. "They're coming here because they're running from Communists."

"It doesn't matter," was the response. "They're Vietnamese aren't they?"

Niceville tried to cover up its initial xenophobic reactions by organizing a welcome when the first Vietnamese arrived there May 4. The Niceville high-school band turned out and played "God Bless America."

The predominant objection to the refugees, however, was that they would "take away American jobs" and swell welfare rolls.

Ford was reported as being "damned mad" at the widespread opposition to his refugee program. "It just burns me up," he said. At his May 6 news conference he declared he was "primarily very upset because the United States has had a long tradition of opening its doors to immigrants of all countries."

But the tradition of American imperialism has always been different from what Ford the great humanitarian would have us believe. The door has been open only for

those the ruling class decides it wants to allow in. For the rest, the door is kept firmly shut.

For about 675,000 counterrevolutionary Cubans the door was wide open.

But it is a different matter for the victims of repressive dictatorships around the world.

Haitians fleeing the Duvalier dictatorship who manage to reach the United States are subject to imprisonment and deportation; that is, almost certain torture or death in Haiti.

Refugees from the rightist terror in Chile found no open door. Tens of thousands were murdered and tortured after the CIA-backed coup in 1973, but Washington refused asylum to all but a few of the many Chileans and others who had to flee.

After President Marcos of the Philippines declared martial law in September 1972, many Filipinos resident in the United States applied to political asylum. But the State Department and the Immigration Service "have given them the run-around," and they live in "mortal fear" of being deported, according to a letter printed in the May 3 *Los Angeles Times*. The writer demanded that Filipino refugees be given the same treatment as the South Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees.

Refugees from dictators in Washington's camp are not the only ones turned away, however. When Hitler came to power in Germany and millions of Jews faced death, the White House barred granting them refuge in the United States. Only a handful were admitted. In 1939 a bill that would have allowed 20,000 children from Germany under the age of fifteen to enter the country was rejected by Congress.

The same year almost 1,000 Jewish refugees on board the *St. Louis* sailed from Hamburg to the coast of Florida and were denied permission to land. The ship returned to Europe and many of its passengers ended up in Nazi concentration camps.

Hitler's admirers are welcome, but not his victims.

Not all the refugees filling camps from Guam to Florida are like Nguyen Cao Ky and his ilk, however. Many will no doubt clamor to return to Vietnam once they get a taste of what life in the land of the big PX is really like for people lacking white skins and ready cash.

Propaganda from Thieu and his masters in Washington about a Communist "blood-bath" after liberation was certainly a factor in bringing many to leave. One government clerk who was left behind in Saigon was puzzled as he watched the jubilation in the city when the liberation forces arrived. "We were told we would be killed," he remarked to a British reporter. "It looks as if that was another lie."

Others were press-ganged into leaving and already want to go back.

The Refugees Ford Refuses to Welcome



Conrad/Los Angeles Times

President Ford has urged "charity and compassion" in welcoming Saigon refugees to the United States. But his "compassion" does not extend to others whose lives were disrupted or shattered by the war in Vietnam: the thousands of Americans who have in effect been exiled for their resistance to fighting the Vietnam War.

Only 24,881 of the 124,400 officially eligible draft resisters and deserters came forward to take advantage of Ford's "conditional amnesty." The program, now terminated, required war resisters to sign a pledge essentially repudiating their refusal to fight and to submit to a period of forced labor called "alternative service." Pro-amnesty groups estimate that the actual number of war resisters is close to one million.

Forty-five South Vietnamese air force mechanics were drugged and kidnapped when their pilots fled to Thailand on April 29. They petitioned Ford to "send us back to South Vietnam as soon as possible no matter what the Communist government has reserved for us."

Also at Guam was a twenty-eight-year-old teacher, who boarded a small boat near Vung Tau just to flee the rocket attacks, thinking the boat would return to shore that night. Instead he was picked up by an American ship.

According to United Press International, interviews with refugees at Clark Air Base in the Philippines indicated that many would have been safe in Saigon, and some said they already wished they had never left.

Some of the Vietnamese associated with the American intervention were well aware of what to expect in the United States and consciously stayed behind. "In the end the color of the skin counts for more than politics," said one. "Anyone who has lived in either the United States or Vietnam knows this, and I have done both. The Vietcong, like me, are yellow."

The intended station in life for many of the refugees was frankly indicated by a director of the organization arranging resettlement. Once the flow of wealthy businessmen and generals with bags of gold leveled off, a less favored class of refugees began arriving. It may be easier to find a job "for this kind of person," he said. "Everyone seems to want a maid or a cook."

A Vietnamese orphan who lived in America for ten years now wants to go home. "I thought nothing could possibly be wrong in America," said Son Minh Nguyen,

who came to California at the age of eleven. "Next to heaven, America is it, I thought." But he found that he couldn't get accepted. "They can't accept me and I can't accept them," he said. "I would prefer to go back to the simple and enjoyable life I had in Vietnam. Whether it's Communist or not, I don't care."

Do Ba Phuoc, a graduate student in mathematics who has also been in America for ten years, greeted the end of the war by announcing his intention to return home. His father, who had at one time been vice-minister of education in the Saigon government, arrived in California with his mother on a refugee flight just as he was preparing for a journey in the opposite direction.

Now that peace has come, and Vietnam has a new beginning, wrote Phuoc in the May 2 *Los Angeles Times*, "along with many other Vietnamese students in this country, for the first time I will have a chance to make a *lasting* contribution to my homeland. An American education will afford an opportunity to build—not destroy—Vietnam. . . ."

"The U.S. airlift has sown discord among the Vietnamese, and many have fled in panic. But I am sure that, as the facts about the nation's new life filter out, many will seek to return home. . . ."

"For the people of Vietnam, this peace ends the long interruption in our 4,000-year-old tradition of independence from foreign domination. In truth, then, the *common* people of Vietnam owe a tribute to the *common* people of the United States, for it is you who have given us back our freedom. It is you who forced the government in Washington to end this unjust and immoral war." □

U.S. Stalinists Bar Socialist Road for Vietnam

By Caroline Lund

On May Day the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party issued a statement hailing the collapse of the Saigon puppet government and the ouster of the American imperialist forces from Vietnam as "a victory for all those throughout the world who are fighting oppression and exploitation."

The statement was published in the May 9 issue of the American revolutionary-socialist weekly, the *Militant*.*

The American Stalinists did not like that statement. They took it up at once in an article signed by Erik Bert, which appeared in the May 7 *Daily World*, the newspaper that reflects the opinions of the Communist party U.S.A.

What Bert objects to most strenuously is the SWP's advocacy of socialist revolution in South Vietnam.

The SWP statement holds that it is now possible in Vietnam to achieve not only self-determination and unification of the country but also "a social revolution to abolish the entire system of exploitation for private profit."

Erik Bert is in complete disagreement:

"The SWP statement concludes with a call for a 'workers and peasants' government independent' of 'the landlords and capitalists and their military machine, which supported the U.S.-created puppet government.' It warns that "reconciliation" with the remaining capitalist-landlord forces' would mean 'going against the desires and interests of the masses.' It calls for 'the establishment of proletarian democracy,' the establishment of a 'government based on soviets as exemplified in the October, 1917, revolution in Russia.'

"This projected course is 'revolutionary' in phrases and counter-revolutionary in intent and direction. . . .

"The token of that counter-revolutionary intent is the failure to mention, in the course of the long statement, the Vietnam Workers' Party, the heart and soul of the Vietnamese liberation struggle.

"That is not forgetfulness. It is a signal that the demand for a 'government based on soviets,' and similar 'revolutionary' goals, will be directed against the Vietnam Workers Party. That is the 'perspective'

which the Trotskyites projected as 'revolutionary.'"

By labeling the SWP's support for an anticapitalist revolution as "counter-revolutionary," Bert shows that he is against overturning the capitalist system. He is also against establishing a government based on the mass organizations of the workers and peasants in the pattern set by the Bolsheviks in the October 1917 Revolution in Russia.

Is that the position of the Vietnam Workers party? Quite possibly it is. The leaders of that party, like Bert, received their early training in the school of Stalinism—which is not the school of Leninism.

Yet under the pressure of events they may find themselves—as at certain times in the past—compelled to go further along the path of revolution than they expect, or Bert would approve.

The SWP statement notes that "the upsurge in South Vietnam and the crumbling of the puppet Saigon government have already carried the Provisional Revolutionary Government [which is led by the Vietnam Workers party] well beyond its stated program of 'reconciliation' with the now collapsed Saigon regime."

If the Vietnam Workers party, in line with Bert's views, opposes the pressure for a workers and peasants government, for anti-capitalist economic measures, for organs of workers democracy, then sooner or later Vietnamese militants will certainly come forward to lead the masses in a struggle for these demands, which accord with the historic perspectives opened by the Bolshevik Revolution.

The *Daily World's* hack is particularly upset by the SWP's criticisms of the role played by Moscow and Peking; that is, the charge that the two Stalinist bureaucracies failed to provide adequate support to the Vietnamese liberation fighters. This treacherous conduct greatly delayed the victory and increased its cost in blood and suffering.

Bert does not specifically defend Peking's role. Either he agrees with the SWP in this instance or he considers his bread to be buttered only on the Moscow side. He says:

"The socialist countries extended vast aid over the years to the liberation forces in Indochina; preeminent was the military, economic, and diplomatic aid of the Soviet Union."

As "proof" he cites a statement by the Provisional Revolutionary Government extending "warm thanks" to "all socialist countries" on the day of its victory over the Saigon regime.

However, the SWP statement does not deny that both Moscow and Peking provided military aid and that this aid was important in enabling the Vietnamese to continue their struggle. It simply states the fact that this aid was inadequate in view of the scale of the American imperialist aggression and the ability of both workers states to provide much more.

In 1971, for example, Moscow's military aid to North Vietnam—\$100 million—was less than one-tenth of the total foreign military aid it granted. Egypt, Iraq, and India all received significantly more than Vietnam.

The SWP declaration states its agreement with Che Guevara on this point. Guevara's view was that Moscow and Peking from the beginning of the war should have treated Vietnam as "an inviolable part of socialist territory."

If Brezhnev and Mao had done this—that is, if they had joined together in making it clear to Washington that the bombing of North Vietnam would be considered the equivalent of an attack on Moscow or Peking—this would have forced the Pentagon to weigh very carefully the prospect that further escalation of the attack would result in a powerful response from the world's two largest workers states.

Bert refers to the "diplomatic aid" provided by Moscow. What is he talking about? The way Brezhnev clinked glasses of champagne with Nixon as that infamous figure carpet bombed North Vietnam?

The *Daily World's* hatchet artist claims that the SWP's criticism of the Kremlin is "in polar contrast to the outlook of the Vietnamese liberation forces."

In fact, the Vietnamese Stalinists themselves, in a cautious and indirect way, voiced criticism of Moscow and Peking as their country suffered under the murderous assault of Nixon's B-52s.

An editorial in the August 17, 1972, issue of *Nhan Dan*, organ of the North Vietnamese Stalinist party, stated: "In other words, to carry out the 'Nixon doctrine' U.S. imperialists have applied the policy of reconciliation toward a number of big powers in the hope of having a free hand to consolidate their forces, oppose the world revolutionary movement, suppress the revolution at home, bully the small countries, break the national liberation movement while not relinquishing its plan to prepare a new world war.

"For the socialist countries, safeguarding peace and carrying out peaceful coexistence cannot be separated from the world movement of independence, democracy and socialism. If this is aimed only at caring for

*See *Intercontinental Press*, May 12, p. 638, for the text. A Spanish translation appears elsewhere in this issue.

the narrow, immediate interests of a country, it will not only harm the revolutionary movements of various countries, but, in the end, will bring to these very countries incalculable losses and make them give up their lofty internationalist duty. . . ."

Moscow and Peking even refrained from helping to mobilize antiwar actions on an international scale. In view of the mass influence of the Communist parties in Europe and elsewhere, they could have done much to inspire gigantic protests in the streets and trade-union actions on the job that could have politically isolated the White House much earlier in the war.

In face of the default of Moscow and Peking it fell to the Trotskyist movement to take the political lead in organizing an effective international antiwar movement. This movement eventually grew so powerful that it played a primary role in forcing an end to direct U.S. military intervention in Vietnam.

For the Socialist Workers party, defense of the right of the Vietnamese people to determine their own fate did not begin in the 1960s. The May 16 issue of the *Militant* documents the record of the party in opposing imperialist domination of Vietnam for the past thirty years.

Erik Bert lies in denying the highly active role of the SWP in building the antiwar movement. Proof that he lies can be found in the letter of thanks sent to the "Chairman, Socialist Workers Party" by P.N. Thach of the Prime Minister's Office of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The letter, referring to an SWP picket line at the French consulate in New York on January 25, 1947, reads, in part: "We were deeply moved by your big demonstration in New York in favor of the struggle for Viet-Nam's independence. On behalf of President HO-CHI-MINH and the Government of Viet-Nam's Republic, I convey to you and your organization our gratitude. . . ."

"It was the first time American people openly supported our present fight." □

No Questions Asked on Cash Sales, Ottawa Tells Nuclear Clients

The Canadian government, embarrassed by India's use of Canadian materials to produce a nuclear explosion last year, announced May 9 a set of guidelines for assistance to other countries in developing nuclear power plants.

In the future, countries receiving such assistance will be required to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen said in the House of Commons.

But he added that this requirement would be waived in the case of a country buying a Canadian-made reactor with its own funds.

Opposition speakers called the new policy ambiguous.

Students Demand 'CIA Go Home'

Popular Protests in Laos; Capitalists Flee Country

"Laos May Be Next" was the heading of an item in the May 11 *New York Times*. The reference was to the impact in Laos of the victories of the liberation forces in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Wealthy Laotians, as well as Chinese and Vietnamese businessmen in Laos, are fleeing the country, demoralized and fearful of losing their property. A May 10 Associated Press dispatch from Vientiane said that "scores of automobiles have been lined up at a ferry here, waiting to cross the Mekong River to Thailand; planes leaving Vientiane have been booked solid for days in advance."

The U.S. embassy in Vientiane has denied any plans for evacuating the close to 1,000 Americans in Laos. However the embassy has reportedly issued an emergency evacuation instructions handbook entitled "Bend With the Wind."

On the other hand, workers, students, and the Pathet Lao liberation fighters have gained confidence from the victories in Vietnam and Cambodia. Fighting broke out on April 14 between the Pathet Lao and rightist troops. The civil war in Laos had virtually ceased during the previous year, following the 1973 cease-fire accord on Laos.

The Pathet Lao has charged that the fighting began with violations of the cease-fire by the mercenary army led by General Vang Pao. The Vang Pao forces have been described in a U.S. Senate report as "organized, trained, equipped and controlled by the Central Intelligence Agency."

The fighting apparently died down after representatives of the Vientiane government and the Pathet Lao intervened in the area of the conflict, around the northern provincial capital of Vang Vieng.

Protests have broken out in the cities as well. A dispatch from Vientiane carried in the May 8 *Washington Post* reported: "In southern Laos, military sources said 2,000 students and workers in the Mekong River town of Pakse seized the town governor and four other officials Tuesday [May 6] in protest against the high cost of living and against officials alleged to have stockpiled rice for selling at exorbitant prices."

On May 9, about 3,000 students and teachers marched through the center of Vientiane protesting high prices and calling for the resignation of a number of rightist members of the coalition government, including Defense Minister Sisouk na Champassak. They also demanded an end to U.S. "aid" activities in Laos. According

to the Associated Press, the students carried signs saying "Yankee Go Home," "CIA go home," and "Cut the Throats of the Rightists."

According to *New York Times* correspondent David Andelman, the demonstration was organized by a coalition of twenty-one leftist groups known as the "21 Organizations."

Five rightist cabinet members of the Laotian coalition government resigned immediately after the demonstration.

Despite the growing ferment among the Laotian people, the Pathet Lao has given no indication of planning to lead a struggle for power in the area controlled by the coalition regime. Andelman wrote from Vientiane May 10, "Western diplomats feel that the pro-Communist group has been able for some time to seize power at any moment, particularly in the atmosphere of fear that has been created in rightist circles during the last week."

The coalition government established in Laos by the 1973 accords rules only the territory formerly held by the Vientiane royalist government. The Pathet Lao continues to govern large areas of the country under its control.

At the May 11 Constitution Day celebration in Vientiane, neutralist Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma declared that "some important changes are about to occur" in Laos.

Participation by the Laotian workers, peasants, and students in these heralded changes is apparently not welcomed, however. On May 7 the coalition cabinet agreed to ban all political demonstrations in the country. □

West German Police Set Up 'Antiterrorist' Unit

Less than two weeks after six persons, allegedly part of the West German urban guerrilla group the Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF—Red Army Faction), seized and blew up Bonn's embassy in Stockholm, the West German government announced May 7 the creation of a "terrorism" branch of the national police.

The new branch will be located in a suburb of Bonn. It will have a staff of 180 officials and a budget of nearly \$3 million in its first year.

According to Justice Minister Werner Maihofer, one of the branch's assignments will be to coordinate the search for members of the RAF who are still at large.

Conflict Between SP and CP Sharpens in Portugal

By Gerry Foley

LISBON—The victory of the Socialist party in the April 25 elections for the Constituent Assembly has apparently given its leaders fresh confidence. They began immediately pushing for more of a voice in the coalition government. They also gave some signs of preparing an offensive against Communist party influence in the daily press, radio, and television.

The leaders of the Communist party responded by trying to prove that they are capable of mobilizing more people than the SP, in particular, more workers.

Thus at the huge May Day rally, the two parties jockeyed for position, leading to a factional scandal that has been played up in the press.

The people were brought out on May Day essentially to show support for the ruling military group; and the reformist parties competed to show which one could rally the most persons for this aim. The main speakers were the president of the republic, General Costa Gomes, and Premier Vasco Gonçalves. Their message was that the workers should produce more goods and make less trouble, and that the students should either study quietly or go to work.

Government Demagoguery

Vasco Gonçalves stressed: "At the present time the essential obstacle that must be overcome is our economic crisis. And we have a limited time in which to accomplish this. Either we will recover by our own efforts, or we will gravely endanger the advance of our revolutionary process, the future of our fatherland. We would face the return of fascism, economic dependence, and the loss of our liberties.

"Our struggle is decisive. I appeal here to all workers and all patriots to throw themselves into the battle for production; the future of the revolution depends on victory in this battle. The battle of production is a necessary stage in overcoming the economic crisis and creating the conditions for the future development of the economy on the road to socialism. . . .

"In the present conditions, it is essential and urgent to begin the battle for production. The main role in this belongs to you workers. Today after the measures that have been taken against monopoly capital and the landowners, changes that signify establishing state control of the basic sectors of production and launching agrarian reform, you have a guarantee that your

labor and your determination will benefit the community and not the privileged classes.

"What then does the Armed Forces Movement [MFA—Movimento das Forças Armadas] ask from the workers:

- Cohesion and unity behind genuinely national objectives, objectives that they will have a voice in setting.

- Deemphasizing party rivalries in the trade-union organizations.

- A clear view of the national reality.

- Realism in wage demands.

- Analysis and discussion of the ultra-leftist and anarchistic proposals and the dangers that flow from the fact that they cannot solve the problems we face.

- Unremitting struggle against splitters and provocateurs.

- To work in an exemplary revolutionary way.

- To consider improving your professional skills as a genuinely revolutionary choice.

- To understand that unless we reconstruct the economic apparatus and the state apparatus, neither the Provisional Government nor the Armed Forces Movement can correct the grave distortions in the wage structure."

Vasco Gonçalves called on the workers to assume the responsibilities that would fall on them under a socialist system when they would have real control of the economy and the product of their labor.

Capitalism Still Intact

But the capitalist system in Portugal remains intact. The government has nationalized only industries operating at a deficit, in which there was already large state participation, or enterprises whose owners were involved in plotting a military rebellion against the present regime.

Not only do the workers have no control over the economy in general; they have no direct voice in the government. The military rulers have been stressing that the elections will not affect government policy. At the same time, they have offered no more democratic way by which the workers could express their will.

In this context, Vasco Gonçalves's statements were those of a bourgeois demagogue. He was using socialist-sounding language to accomplish a capitalist objective, to increase the productivity of labor under the capitalist system.

The reference to "deemphasizing party rivalries in the trade-union organizations" was an interesting one. Apparently the premier feared that a struggle between the CP and the SP in the union movement would make it more difficult to keep the unions subordinated to the government's policy.

General Costa Gomes made an even clearer appeal for a return to "order."

"We must get our youth to understand that we are on the road that leads to the new society.

"There were times when their political struggle took first place and justified their putting their books aside, neglecting their classes and studies. Now all that is changed. Today, the most talented, the most strong-willed, the most dedicated, the future intellectual workers, will study. The others must go into action, contributing by the strength of their arms toward meeting the great challenge of producing wealth that is directly socially useful."

Radicalizing Students

The conflict between the government and the student movement is apparently continuing. On April 30, an allegedly ultra-left-Maoist-influenced slate defeated the CP-backed slate in the liberal arts department at the University of Lisbon.

On April 27, the Ministry of Education and Culture announced that it would not recognize the decisions of general assemblies in the schools. The communiqué said:

"Some higher schools in Lisbon persist in the notion of maintaining a total autonomy, trying to reduce the Ministry of Education to the role of a mere executor of the 'decisions' made in the various assemblies in these schools. . . .

"Such a line of conduct is a product essentially of a false concept of scholastic autonomy. While under fascism the struggle for autonomy fitted into a more general political struggle against the political system, in the present moment autonomy can only be understood as a form of collaborating with the revolutionary process."

General Costa Gomes also stressed the "battle for production."

"The total transformation of the principles and routines of capitalism on the road toward a just distribution of the wealth produced for the benefit of the nonprivileged classes has had the following consequences:

- Instability and turbulence in the relations between workers and employers.

- Disturbing gaps in the legislation and principles governing democratic authority in the system of production.

- Inevitable delusions on the part of some persons concerned about their rights, both workers and capitalists.

"From this and other phenomena has resulted a lack of the means and confidence needed for investment, so that we are now living dangerously beyond our means.

"Victory in the economic battle is going to require more sacrifices, more exertions, more discipline, and more democratic authority on the job."

The representative of Intersindical (the national union federation), Antero Martins, a Stalinist, translated the message of the main figures in the military government into more left-sounding language:

"The nationalizations must continue and the big stockholders and landowners must not get any compensation, in view of the fact that they are responsible for the present economic situation and the poverty and scarcity the Portuguese people are suffering. But comrades, we workers must realize that the economy is no longer something apart from us; we must realize that the task of socialist construction is our responsibility. This implies a clear affirmation of the principle of 'control' over production by the workers in the interests of production and efficiency, coordinated by the planning bodies that will carry out the guidelines soon to be established."

Such formulations indicate how far the opportunist CP leadership has been pushed by the pressures of the situation. But it is clear from the context in which they were made that the CP is still just as committed as before to functioning as a transmission belt in the labor movement for a demagogic bourgeois regime.

Incidents at the Stadium

But, buoyed up by the results of the elections, the SP was determined to assert its claim to be the best organizer of the masses for the government. And that led to a nasty conflict in the stadium itself on May Day, which only a tiny minority of the hundreds of thousands present could have noticed but which received sensational treatment in the communications media.

O *Século* reporter Carlos Coutinho gave an eyewitness account:

"I saw SP banners in every part of the stadium and a marked concentration of them among a group of a few thousand persons who took a different attitude from the rest of the crowd. They went to occupy an area on the left of the speakers stand.

"On the stand I saw Costa Gomes, Vasco Gonçalves, members of the Conselho Superior da Revolução [High Council of the Revolution], and representatives of the parties invited. I did not see anyone from the SP.

"I saw a man from Intersindical begin to speak, greeted by applause from the crowd and boos from the dissident sector. I was two meters from the speaker. I had fifty meters of packed crowd to get through to

reach the dissidents. I thought about 'unity' and didn't leave my spot.

"I saw the prime minister begin his speech and again I heard applause from the crowd and boos from the dissident sector.



COSTA GOMES: Made call for "return to order" main theme of his May Day speech.

There was no more 'unity' to worry about. Pushing with my shoulder, I managed to gain ten meters in ten minutes.

"In the center of the dissident section, I saw a red banner saying 'Diário Popular—Partido Socialista.' My watch said 6:23. Under the banner were Mário Soares, Marcelo Curto, and other leading personalities of the SP.

"I saw Costa Gomes read, stop, and start reading again. Applause came from the crowd and boos from the dissident section. I moved further ahead. I heard men and women with SP banners and emblems complaining about the behavior of their comrades. I jumped a divider. I stepped on people. I was left without a button on my coat. I crawled on my hands and knees between ten or twelve pairs of legs. But I reached the center of the dissident section. Mário Soares and Marcelo Curto were now standing on a row of seats.

"I saw the dissident section shout energetically, 'SP, SP, SP,' and 'Socialismo sim, Ditadura não.'

"I saw the crowd respond and then drown out the dissidents with 'Socialismo sim, Vigaristas [confidence men] não.' I tried to identify the affiliations of the crowd, and saw banners from the FSP,¹ the MDP,² and

1. Frente Socialista Popular—Socialist People's Front.

the PCP.³ I didn't see any banners from the MES⁴ but I saw emblems. . . .

"I saw the president of the republic end his speech and the dissident sector break abruptly out of the middle of the stadium and start a demonstration that ended only after passing through several streets of the city.

"I saw Mário Soares, a minister without portfolio and general secretary of the Partido Socialista Português, insulted and booed from about two meters distance throughout his winding path out of the stadium."

In a radio interview, broadcast on the evening of May 2, Soares claimed that military police and SP militants held off the would-be attackers.

CP Counteraccusation

The Communist party, which along with its allies now appears to have the predominant influence in the Lisbon press and communications media, accused the SP of trying to disrupt the rally.

"The PCP regrets the incidents that were provoked in the Lisbon rally by the Partido Socialista, which was trying, without success, to harass the speakers and interfere with the progress of the great workers' festival.

"At a time when we need stronger unity of all the forces that want to fight for democracy and socialism, such conduct in no way serves the interests and unity of the workers, cooperation among the democratic forces, the alliance between the people and the Armed Forces Movement, and our young Portuguese democracy."

The Secretariat of Intersindical made a stronger attack. It accused the SP of creating incidents to put in question the legitimacy of the union confederation, which was given legal recognition shortly before the May 1 demonstrations by the Conselho Superior da Revolução.

"The Secretariat of Intersindical understands that, while the leaders of the Socialist party tried to stage another splitting maneuver, the working people present in the great rally in the Estádio Primeiro de Maio proved able to give the response that was called for and did not allow the profound significance of the commemorations of International Workers Day, the day of the working people, the genuinely progressive forces, and the Armed Forces Movement, to be sullied."

Intersindical representatives claimed that

2. Movimento Democrático Português—Portuguese Democratic Movement.

3. Partido Comunista Português—Portuguese Communist party.

4. Movimento da Esquerda Socialista—Movement of the Socialist Left.

the SP had congregated in the Praça do Chile rather than the Alameda (a large mall near the Praça do Chile) in order to stage a demonstration separate from the rest.

Diário de Notícias, which the SP claims is controlled by the CP, published a report indicating that the SP planned to create an incident; it was a purported account of a meeting of the SP workers nuclei on April 28:

"After the importance of a 'massive representation' of the SP was stressed, it was decided that on the Day of the Worker the assembly point would be the Praça do Chile and the Avenida Almirante Reis, while the activists of the MDP and the PCP would assemble respectively next to the Cinema Império and the Instituto Superior Técnico, leaving the Alameda Afonso Henriques for the unions and, naturally, the Intersindical. [The Cinema Império is on the downtown side of the Alameda, the Instituto Superior Técnico is on one end.] This was said in a meeting in which Marcelo Curto participated.

"The need for a strong Socialist delegation was justified by Henrique Gomes da Costa, who announced that a 'big surprise' might be offered during the rally by the president of the republic or the premier, a surprise that would require a strong protest from the Socialist workers.

"This surprise—it was revealed later—could be related to the legal recognition of the Intersindical exactly two months before its congress, to be held at the end of June, recognition that would make this body the only institution recognized by the bosses and put it above the Workers Commissions that have won so many victories for the working class."

SP Proclaims Loyalty

The initial statement of the SP National Secretariat made only a limited sally against the Intersindical. It claimed that the SP contingents took the place in the march that had been assigned to them, and as a result arrived late and found CP contingents occupying most of the stadium. It also claimed that individual groups of SPers were stopped from coming in. The communiqué noted that the SP had agreed that no representatives of political parties would speak. However, the party leaders were supposed to be on the platform and the SP leaders had been prevented from reaching the platform by the Intersindical security squad.

The statement concluded: "The Socialist party does not confuse the sectarianism of the Intersindical elements that took this attitude with the entire organization. But it cannot fail to point out that the Intersindical has identified itself with minority parties, since it only publicly recognized the presence of these parties and ignored the

presence of the largest Portuguese workers party. Thus, it put itself in a position that cannot be defended in the face of the real country."

The minority parties were apparently the CP and its allies and satellites.

The Lisbon federation of the SP issued a statement later, extending the attack:

"Only the Socialist party can assure the Armed Forces Movement of the popular support essential to the defense and progress of the democratic revolution and the construction of socialism.

"Intersindical insulted the workers that consider the SP their class party. By offending the SP, Intersindical offended the majority of the working class and the people of Portugal.

"The Socialist party is with the Armed Forces Movement for freedom and democracy, for socialism. But it would betray the confidence that the people placed in it if it allowed minority forces to substitute themselves for the Portuguese people and the Armed Forces Movement. We were a people insulted for forty-eight years by a minority that was violence institutionalized. We do not accept the manipulation of the masses by activist minorities. By the attitude it took the Intersindical dropped its mask, insulted, and excluded millions of Portuguese workers from 'unity.'"

A Venomous Quarrel

A factor in the conflict was the quarrel between the SP and two small centrist groups, the MES and the FSP. The feud is especially bitter in the latter case, perhaps because the FSP is a recent split-off from the SP. The MES split some years ago from the MDP while it still was a unitary organization of the "democratic opposition." The MES was never part of the SP.

These groups, which got a little more than 1 percent each in the April 25 elections, have become, to all intents and purposes, political satellites of the CP. The SP has complained that the presence of such groups, along with the CP's democratic front, the present MDP, gives the Stalinists the predominant voice on "unitary" platforms.

The quarrel is a venomous one. The FSP has denied the working-class character of the SP outright, making "Social Democracy" its main target. The MES has a more nuanced but similar position. Intersindical claimed that it was because of the SP's protests against giving speaking time to representatives of these two parties that it was forced to exclude all speakers for political parties from the program. As a result of this, the MES refused to participate as an organization in the demonstration.

However, the Communist party could hardly have been unhappy with this ar-

rangement, since in effect it left the program exclusively to representatives of the CP-controlled labor federation—who could now speak for the entire working class—and representatives of the Armed Forces Movement who spoke for the government.

The Intersindical leadership did exhibit certain contradictions in its reply to the SP charges, contradictions that could be explained by a double-dealing factional spirit. In a communiqué entitled "A Victory for the Working People, a Victory for the Alliance of the People and the Armed Forces Movement," the Intersindical Secretariat said:

"In the negotiations, Intersindical always said that its intention was that the leaders of all the organizations invited should be at the head of the demonstration along with representatives of the MFA. The SP had said, however, that its leaders would not march alongside the leaders of the MES and the FSP, and would therefore head up their own demonstration with their own 'security squad.'

"When the body of the SP contingent arrived at the Estádio Primeiro de Maio, it was hoped that its leaders would go to the platform, where it was always intended that they should have a place. However, what happened was that Dr. Soares, instead of going to the platform, stayed in a section of the stadium to hold party rallies. He did so while the premier and the president of the republic were speaking, thereby showing his disrespect for these figures."

In its May 3 issue, *A Capital*, the most objective of the Lisbon dailies, reported:

"Intersindical leader José Gomes confirmed that he prevented Dr. Mário Soares from coming onto the platform while the president was speaking not only because 'the Socialist party had violated the accords previously reached' but also because it was clear that on this occasion also 'it might provoke still more grave incidents.'

"This leader also mentioned that in previous conversations the SP leaders had assured him that the rumors circulating that activists of this party would disrupt the festival by challenging the institutionalization of the Intersindical were unfounded. José Gomes referred further to the stubborn attitude that the SP had shown by falling in at the tail of the demonstration after its representatives had tried several times to take a place at the 'head' of the demonstration."

SP Stages Protest March

The clash between the CP and the SP created an immediate crisis. The SP organized a snap protest demonstration on May 2. Apparently the government tried to ban the action but backed down. The central part of Rossio Square, where the march was

supposed to form, was sealed off by a ring of Copcon⁵ troops. But large numbers of demonstrators showed up and were allowed to march on the Avenida da Liberdade, the city's main avenue.

There must have been 10,000 when the march started down the broad thoroughfare toward the statue of the Marquis de Pombal. A *Capital* estimated the number at "tens of thousands" by the time it reached the National Palace.

The SP-controlled paper *República* gave the figure 50,000. But this paper did not appear on the day of the march. The demonstrators obviously believed that it had been banned; there were many shouts of "Down with censorship." But when it came out, the paper explained that its May 2 issue had been blocked by a nonpolitical dispute with the printers.

The class composition of the march seemed quite mixed. There were many youth, some workers, but the crowd seemed largely middle-class. Some of the men in the cordon ringing the crowd were carrying briefcases. The CP crowds I have seen have also been largely middle-class but seemed to have more worker activists.

The main slogans were aimed at the Intersindical: "Trade-union elections!" "We want one union federation, but by a vote!" Some of the most frequently chanted slogans pointed up the SP's electoral victory: "The people's will must be respected." "The people voted, the SP won!" Some were clearly anti-Communist: "O PS é do povo, não é do Moscovo" (The SP belongs to the people, not to Moscow). Some were in-between: "O Inter-Cunhal não é Portugal!" (The Inter-Cunhal, that is, CP general secretary Alvaro Cunhal's Intersindical, is not Portugal). Some enthusiasts took to dancing and singing: "Viva PS, viva liberdade."

I heard marchers say that the Intersindical didn't represent anyone, that its leaders were not elected. However, many of the slogans the marchers took up were of a narrow partisan character. "O PS foi atacado, o PS não fica calado" (The SP was attacked, the SP is not going to remain silent). "PS, PS, PS."

As the march turned toward the west at the statue of the Marquis de Pombal, one of the marshals told the marchers that they were going to the National Palace to "show the strength of the SP."

The strangest note was provided by the pro-SP Maoists of the PCP (ML) who marched at the end of the line, shouting: "Down with Social Fascism," "Down with Russian imperialism."

They also had banners saying: "Neither

Kissinger nor Brezhnev," and "Neither Prague nor Chile."

There were a number of signs from SP factory nuclei. The SP, of course, is anxious to utilize its electoral victory to try to break



VASCO GONCALVES: Wants workers to produce more goods and less trouble.

the CP hold on the national union federation. Unless they can do this, they do not have much of a future as the "mass organizers" for the Armed Forces Movement.

However, the SP's opportunistic inconsistency and conservatism limit its chances of putting up an effective fight against the CP. At the present time at least, because of the temper of the masses, the SP cannot go far to the right of the government and the CP without risking disastrous losses. At the same time, it has no intention of going to the left of the government, at least in a general way. It vies with the CP in avowals of loyalty to the ruling "progressive officers."

Furthermore, under present conditions, it could not break definitively with the military without breaking with its bourgeois perspectives, which it is constitutionally unable to do. However, the pressure of a power struggle can force both reformist parties further than they want to go as they try to outbid each other in appealing to sections of the masses and "showing their strength." The development of the conflict that started in the Estádio Primeiro de Maio seems to indicate that.

The period between now and the Intersindical congress may determine which way the SP will go. The party could, for a time, offer an alternative to militant sec-

tions of workers repelled by the CP's attacks on labor struggles, especially now that the Maoist groups have lost much of their credibility because of their extreme sectarianism. On the other hand, the SP could try to bloc with the liberal bourgeois party, the Partido Popular Democrático,⁶ on a platform of abstract democracy, which could offer a cover for right-wing opposition to the government.

Maoists Excluded

The conflict between the CP and the SP could offer an opening for independent militant currents opposed to the CP's bureaucratic hold. On the other hand, an all-out power struggle between the SP and the CP could open the way for foreign intervention in defense of "democracy." The situation is obviously a very explosive one.

This is especially so since the Communist party has maintained its prestige among the more combative section of the workers by stressing its "toughness." But the toughness of the CP is mostly bureaucratic boasting and bullying that in the present conditions can play a provocative role.

Whatever the specific political effects of the CP-SP conflict, there is no doubt about the destructiveness of the sectarian spirit it is fostering right now. If the CP were a real revolutionary party, if it were loyal to the workers it claims to represent, if it really wanted to be a "bulwark against reaction," it would do everything possible to avoid a divisive power struggle in the workers movement.

It would assure a complete and undeniable democratization of the union structures and guarantee the rights of minorities to put forward their points of view. It would call for discussing all differences openly and frankly and show its good faith by helping to organize an impartial investigation of the facts of this conflict. And most importantly, it would rely on the workers themselves to settle disputes between the workers parties and tendencies and not a Bonapartist bourgeois military government.

Despite the efforts of the CP, the SP, and the Maoists to create and deepen divisions within the working class, there is a strong sentiment for unity in action among the workers and the poor masses. The slogan of a "Workers united front" chanted by the Trotskyists in the May 1 demonstration drew a friendly response even from the CP contingents.

Most of the Maoist groups did not attend the rally. The Intersindical leaders said that the Maoists were not invited because they "do not support the program of the Armed Forces Movement." This statement is an ominous commentary on the CP's

5. Comando Operacional do Continente—Continental Operational Command, the state security forces.

6. PPD—Democratic People's party.

intentions, if it can consolidate its political power. But the Maoists were easy to exclude because of their sectarianism.

The Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, the Portuguese sympathizing group of the Fourth International) was invited to participate, although it did not sign the Pact-Program. The other Trotskyist group that claims adherence to the Fourth International, the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party), also participated. Both groups stressed the need for working-class unity in action.

In addition to the slogan of "Workers united front," the PRT called for a government of the CP, SP, and Intersindical, for workers self-defense groups coordinated by Intersindical, and for unions that would unite all the workers in each factory.

Both groups carried slogans designed for the military contingents who participated for the first time in a May Day demonstration. The LCI chanted: "Soldiers, workers, the same struggle." The PRT: "Equal rights for soldiers, noncoms, and officers."

The LCI also raised internationalist slogans such as "For a red workers Europe" and "Spain, Portugal, socialist revolution." Both groups joined with the Intersindical security squads to prevent groups from the bourgeois PPD from entering the march.

At the start of the march, it looked as if the Trotskyists would not be able to march together. Their assembly points were on opposite sides of the Alameda. But as the march started, the PRT was able to move in behind the LCI and a delegation from the French section of the Fourth International that was marching with it. The Trotskyist contingent was about 700 strong, more than twice as numerous as that of the FSP that was marching just in front of the LCI.

So the Trotskyists were a very visible part of the gigantic march and seem to have made at least a small start in getting across the idea of the need for working-class unity against reaction, working-class political independence, and the need to destroy the roots of the capitalists' political power, the capitalist economic system itself. □

Franco to Legalize Some Strikes

The Franco regime approved a law May 9 permitting the right to strike in Spain. The law would make such activity legal for the first time since the end of the Civil War in 1939.

However, the new law still bans strikes considered to be politically motivated, strikes by public employees, and sympathy strikes.

The new bill is to be "studied" by a legislative commission before official publication.

Depression Deepens in the United States

Unemployment Figures Tell the Story



Pierotti/New York Post

The figures released by Washington May 2 show that current unemployment is only a few percentage points away from the levels of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

According to the Department of Labor Statistics, 8.9% of the American work force was unemployed in April. A total of 8,167,000 workers could not find jobs, an increase of 3.3 million since as recently as last August.

This figure does not include those who have given up looking for work. The government estimates that there are 1.1 million "discouraged" workers in this category.

The White House has argued that while unemployment levels this high are regrettable, workers should be thankful they are not as bad off as their parents and grandparents were in the 1930s.

This argument is based on a misleading comparison of the statistics. The fact is that unemployment was not counted in the same way in the 1930s as it is today. In the Great Depression, persons working on New Deal relief programs were counted as *unemployed*. Today, persons working on similar programs are counted as *employed*.

To see the difference this "bookkeeping" change makes, consider the figures for 1939.

In 1939 the 3.1 million persons working on relief programs were counted as unemployed, bringing the jobless rate to 17.2%. However, if current methods for measuring unemployment are applied to 1939, and these 3.1 million workers are counted as "employed," the jobless figure for that year would drop to 11.5%.

In other words, only a little less than three percentage points separates the current level of overall unemployment from the comparable figure in 1939.

For many sectors of the American work force, the current unemployment is far above 1939 levels. The latest report gave the following breakdown:

- Blue-collar workers: 13% unemployed.
- Blacks: 14.6% unemployed.
- Construction workers: 19.3% unemployed.
- Teen-agers of all races: 20.4% unemployed.
- Black teen-agers: 40.2% unemployed.

Furthermore, for the hardest-hit category of Black teen-agers there is reason to believe that the official figures actually far *understate* real unemployment.

Professor Bernard E. Anderson of the Wharton School of Finance estimates that the true figure for Black teen-age unemployment is actually closer to 80%.

Anderson draws attention to two facts.

First, for the entire past decade—"good times" and bad—official figures show that the unemployment rate for Black teen-agers has stayed at 25% or higher.

Second, official figures also show that the number of Black youths "participating in the labor force" has shrunk by nearly half—from 67.8% in 1950 to 34.7% in 1973—while the number of white youths remained steady at about 63%.

Anderson concludes that great numbers of young Blacks have simply dropped out of the labor force in despair. And since they are not considered by the government to be "actively seeking work" they are not counted among the unemployed.

If this huge pool of hidden unemployment were taken into account, Anderson estimates, the official figures would show that 4 out of 5 Black teen-agers are unemployed.

American Workers to Lose \$8 Billion This Year in Cutbacks, Higher Taxes

American workers can expect to lose \$8 billion this year in social-service cutbacks and increased state and local taxes, according to a congressional survey released May 6.

The survey of forty-eight state governments and 140 local governments showed that tax increases totaling \$3.6 billion and cutbacks in social services of \$3.3 billion are planned for this year. An additional \$1 billion of projected delays in construction and other capital expenditures pushes the overall figure toward \$8 billion.

Intercontinental Press

International Call for Abortion Pickets at British Embassies

By Estelle Cordano

PARIS, April 20—About 250 persons attending a two-day meeting here to discuss the fight for abortion and contraception in Western Europe voted unanimously to organize picket lines on June 21 at British embassies in solidarity with the demonstration called for that day by the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) in Britain.

The Paris meeting was sponsored by the French abortion-rights organization Mouvement pour la Liberté de l'Avortement et de la Contraception (MLAC—Movement for Freedom of Abortion and Contraception). Delegations from Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal reported on developments in their countries.

Although the campaigns for an end to reactionary abortion laws are different in each place, one clear pattern emerged from the reports and discussion: Throughout Western Europe, as in Canada and the United States, women fighting for abortion rights are meeting stiff resistance from reactionary forces, including the Catholic church, fascist organizations, and governing political parties. Even in those countries where partial abortion rights have been won, as in Britain and France, women must wage campaigns to defend liberalized laws and to win their implementation.

In Britain, NAC is waging a vigorous campaign in defense of the 1967 abortion law, now under attack in Parliament. The June 21 demonstration has wide support, including support from women in the Trades Union Congress. Several large meetings have been held; the most recent one was a mobilization last week of 800 women who attended an abortion hearing in the House of Commons.

MLAC representatives reported on their fight to win the new abortion law in France and their continuing campaign for its implementation. The law, passed on November 29, 1974, permits abortion on demand during the first ten weeks of pregnancy. Many hospitals, however, still refuse to permit abortions. MLAC is also organizing a campaign to extend abortion rights to minors, who cannot obtain an abortion without approval of their parents.

Representatives of German women's groups reported that they were discussing ways of forming a national coalition to win back a liberalized law that was overturned by the West German Supreme Court on February 25. More than 1,000 women

demonstrated in Berlin to protest that decision, and demonstrations were held in other West German cities as well.

In Italy, "decriminalization committees," which are waging a campaign to remove abortion from the penal code, have organized in response to the government's attack on a Florence abortion clinic. The large demonstrations on International Women's Day, including a demonstration of 10,000 in Milan, had abortion rights as a central theme.

A referendum campaign in Switzerland to win passage of a liberalized bill met with a stormy and well-organized "right to life" opposition. On March 7 the Swiss parliament rejected a bill that would have legalized abortion for other than medical reasons. In demonstrations commemorating International Women's Day March 8, 900 persons in Tessin and 300 in Bern protested the parliament's decision. Women from Switzerland reported that further campaign plans are under way to win abortion rights.

Two women from the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League), Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, reported that not only is abortion illegal in Portugal, but the law still permits a husband to divorce his wife if she practices contraception.

Although there is no organized movement for abortion rights in Portugal, the two

women explained that many women are discussing abortion and feminism, especially since the defense campaign for the Three Marias. One of the women drew loud applause when she said, "The revolution in Portugal will not be made without liberating women from their oppression."

Abortion and contraception are both prohibited in Spain. High fines are imposed on doctors who give women birth-control information. The Spanish delegate told of cases in which women paid up to \$250 to get illegal intrauterine devices.

One of the major questions discussed at the meeting was whether women should put their energies into fighting their governments for abortion rights, or into developing alternative abortion clinics and new methods of pregnancy termination. Some women from MLAC proposed that the meeting support their project to set up a clinic in Toulouse, where women from other countries could get abortions and where those performing abortions could be trained in new methods. This proposal was rejected in favor of the resolution that included support for solidarity picket lines at British embassies on June 21.

Other motions passed at the meeting included a call for a Europe-wide demonstration for abortion rights in Italy in October, and a meeting in Portugal during the summer to help women there begin their work. □

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Labour Budget Lets Workers Have It With Both Barrels

By Tony Hodges

LONDON—"The best chancellor we have." That was the glowing verdict of the *London Times*, Britain's most prominent capitalist newspaper, on April 17, two days after Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey announced tough austerity measures in a speech to Parliament unveiling the Labour government's new budget.

Healey's package of antilabour, probusiness policies was a sure sign, in the opinion of the *Times* editors, that the reformist Labour chancellor had the virtue of standing for "responsible government." "Until we get a better champion of responsible government in a position of power we shall all do well to support him," they advised.

For workers, the consequences of this budget are crystal clear. Taxes, prices, and unemployment will soar.

The standard rate of income tax has been increased by 2% so that it now stands at 35%; and Healey warned that the Labour government would oppose any attempt by trade unionists to offset these increases through wage rises. He said such action was "wrong, damaging and in the end self-defeating."

Sweeping increases in indirect taxes will hit working people the hardest, particularly the low-paid. The Value Added Tax (VAT) on so-called luxury items like washing machines and televisions, formerly 8%, is now 25%. Duties on cars and motorcycles have been jacked up to 60%. Steep new tax rates have been imposed on alcohol and tobacco.

By Healey's own admission these tax increases alone will raise the Retail Price Index by 2.75%. Already, prices are more than 20% above their level a year ago. Three days after Healey's speech, the government announced that retail prices in March were 2% higher than in February and 21.2% higher than in March 1974.

Two other budget measures promise further price increases in the months ahead. Government food subsidy cutbacks of £150 million [£1 equals about US\$2.35] and the axing of £65 million from housing subsidies will mean higher food prices, rents, and rates.

In addition, the government's decision to reduce subsidies to nationalised industries from £550 million to £70 million by the end of this year and to phase them out altogether by next April means further increases in gas and electricity charges, rail fares, and



HEALEY: Says wage increases would be "wrong, damaging . . . self-defeating."

postal rates. Right after the budget announcement, British Rail announced a 15% hike in rail fares starting in May, and further increases at the end of the year.

John Palmer, business editor of the *Guardian*, said in the April 16 issue that "the effect of Mr Healey's measures in the short run could be to push up the annual rate of inflation later this year to more than 25 per cent." In Palmer's opinion, "the Chancellor made no attempt to disguise the fact that if the Budget strategy works living standards will fall this year and maybe next."

Those put out of work by Labour's budget will suffer the worst. Healey himself predicted at least 20,000 more workers would lose their jobs as a direct result of the budget, and that by the end of the year unemployment "could be touching one million."

Healey also announced a cutback of £1,100 million from government expenditure, knocking off £86 million from education and £50 million from the housing programme. While the budget means further deterioration in the quality of welfare services, the billions wasted on armaments have been left virtually untouched.

By contrast to its harsh consequences for working people, the budget gave the go-

ahead for yet more handouts to business, to the tune of £1,200 million.

The capitalist class broadly welcomed the budget, because it accorded with their aim to cut into the living standards of the British working class in order to improve their competitive position in the world capitalist market. In Palmer's view, the budget was essentially a gamble that trade unionists would agree "to allow prices to overtake their money wage increases over the next 12 months or so" and to tolerate the "sharpest cut in average living standards for about 30 years."

The perennial problem facing British capitalists and their governments in recent years has been how to discipline workers to accept such a decline in their standard of living. All attempts so far (the compulsory wage controls of the 1970-74 Tory government and the voluntary wage controls of the "social contract" between the Labour government and the union bureaucrats) have largely failed because workers have consistently refused to shoulder the burden of the crisis facing British capitalism.

Healey's budget reveals that the Labour government—and its capitalist well-wishers—now hope that the rise in unemployment will dampen rank-and-file militancy and make real wage cuts possible.

As Colin Chapman put it in the April 20 *Observer*: "Mr Healey reckons that his toughness will lead to unemployment rising to about a million, and that this will result in moderation in wage claims. The CBI (Confederation of British Industry) believes that unemployment could rise higher."

The *Guardian* in an editorial published on April 11 said that "the main restraining force on wage claims in the year ahead will not be the widely ignored Social Contract but the fear of rising unemployment. Fear of driving an employer to make redundancies already appears to have had a moderating effect on some private sector pay claims."

Furthermore, "when the Government is forced to prune public sector spending drastically—as it is likely to be at some stage this year—unemployment will afflict public sector employees just as badly as those in private firms."

Healey directly threatened public sector workers with the risk of losing their jobs if they fight for "unreasonable" wage claims.

It was this underlying theme of the budget that most appealed to the bourgeois

papers, Tory leaders, and representatives of industry. The April 20 *Observer* remarked that "business has given this Budget a friendlier reception than that accorded any previous post-war Labour effort." The City of London's immediate response was the biggest recorded one-day rise in share values.

A former Tory chancellor of the Exchequer, Reginald Maudling, congratulated Healey. "Not only did he identify the nature of Britain's problem—galloping inflation—and its underlying cause, excessive wage increases, which his political and union colleagues have stimulated or at best not resisted, he actually did something about it."

Labour members of Parliament and trade-union bureaucrats were cautious in their response to the Labour government's new attacks on working-class interests. While seeking to avoid challenging the government, they had to respond to the discontent of trade-union activists. In some cases, they sought to warn the government that the new austerity measures might increase class-struggle moods rather than dampen them.

Norman Atkinson, a former chairman of the left-Social Democratic "Tribune" group of Labour members of Parliament, lamented, for example, that "the cumulative effect of this Budget is to firmly tip it (the social contract) over the edge."

Labour MP Sydney Bidwell complained that "this budget will be looked at with dismay by working people."

At a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour party on April 16 a post-budget report by Healey was received in a friendly tone, indicating that no serious opposition to the government's policy would be mounted by the Tribunate "left."

The attitude of many trade-union leaders was expressed by Eddie McGarry, joint chairman of the British Leyland shop stewards, representing 165,000 workers in the car industry. He said that "it will be much more difficult to persuade our members to stay within the social contract. They will want to protect themselves against these further inroads into their living standards."

Ray Buckton, general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, which has been fighting for a 30% pay rise, announced that his union would expect to get 2.75% more in view of Healey's admission that the budget would push up prices by that amount.

Workers' hostility to the budget was also reflected in an emergency motion passed nearly unanimously at the conference of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) in Aberdeen one day after Healey's speech. The delegates said that they were "appalled" at a budget which "constitutes a serious attack on the standard of living of

working people, as it will increase their cost of living and, at the same time, will have a disastrous effect on employment prospects."

The trade-union leadership has not, however, charted any course of struggle against the government's economic policies.

Interview With Hugo Blanco

The Importance of Defending Political Prisoners

[*Second of two parts*]

Q. What are the general prospects for Latin America?

A. It is obvious that the coup in Chile was a harsh setback for the Latin American revolution, but we must not exaggerate its importance for the class struggle in Latin America. Side by side with it we have upswings in Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, and we could even mention Argentina, where the masses still have not been defeated. There are also upswings in Bolivia and Brazil.

In my opinion there have been upswings of one extent or another and starting from various levels in all the countries I mentioned. Although they have not been spectacular, they do serve as a counterweight to the defeat dealt by the coup in Chile.

I think the general outlook for Latin America is for a rise of independent mass struggles in defense of the conquests the masses have made up to now—in some countries more, in others less—to win more conquests in some countries and also to smash the danger of an ultrareactionary coup wherever one is threatened.

Q. What is your current legal status?

A. My status is not legal; it is illegal. I was taken out of the country in a totally illegal way because there is nothing in Peruvian law about deportation. They can take you prisoner and in some cases the death penalty applies, but deportation does not exist in Peruvian law. There was no trial in my case; they didn't accuse me of anything concrete. They arrested me; they asked me some political questions; and twenty-four hours later they put me on an airplane. After various incidents with changes of planes, they finally landed me in Mexico. Later they gave me a phony passport. Eight months later, they exchanged the passport for a valid one.

All of us who were deported for having

In fact, at a meeting with Labour government ministers on April 21, leaders of the Trades Union Congress once again confirmed their support for the social contract. Healey was glad to tell reporters outside the meeting that the social contract was "in good repair." □

supported mass mobilizations are in the same situation. There are five or six of us and while they have allowed some rightist exiles to return, they have stopped us from coming back.

Q. Why does the government take this position?

A. It is part of the overall repressive measures against the masses and of a governmental policy that we could call suicidal in view of the fact that a coup is drawing nearer. I am willing to participate in mobilizations against a rightist coup, but this is not government policy. The government's policy is to carry out negotiations and other types of actions with the putschists. The government is opposed to the mobilization of the masses. That's why it doesn't permit me to return.

Q. Do you think the government will allow you to return someday?

A. I don't think we should have any illusions about that. There is no reason to believe that this government will allow me to return unless the masses insist on it. I think my return can be made possible as my release from prison was. Why did they release me? Because there was pressure from the masses in Peru, and abroad there was also the pressure of international public opinion. That is why the government had to free me.

I think the same thing will happen with the deportations if world public opinion presses for the return of those deported. Then the Peruvian government will have to give in and permit my return. But the government itself will never find my return to its liking, even though it knows that I will be one more person in the mobilization against the coup, although it knows that I will dedicate myself to that. That is precisely what the government doesn't like.

Q. What role is played by groups like

USLA,³ which defend the victims of political persecution in Latin America?

A. I think they are very important in bringing world public opinion to bear against repression in Latin America. We have seen this even in the case of Chile, which is the most barbaric case we have lived through in Latin America in recent decades. The fact that many refugees have been permitted to leave, that some prisoners have even been released, and that more people have not been killed is owing in large part to the pressure of world public opinion. So, we have to pay attention to this and promote, organize, and bring about broader mass mobilizations, broader displays of world public opinion against these types of crimes. I think in this sense organizations like USLA play a very important role.

Q. What other organizations play such a role?

A. There are all types and sizes of organizations here in Europe. For example, there are the Chile support committees in Sweden, which grew a lot after the coup. They involved many people and fulfilled very important functions.

However, I think they would have played a bigger role and involved many more people if they had not had a point in their program calling for socialism. This restricts the breadth of the committees because adding this point means that only those who are for socialism can join. If they hadn't included this point, there would have been much broader movements that would have brought together all the feelings of solidarity in Sweden toward the Chilean people. There was a massive solidarity against the repression in Chile; in Sweden very few people were indifferent to the massacres and crimes that were being committed there. It would have been possible to organize gigantic mass mobilizations if this restrictive point had not been included.

On the other hand, there are organizations like Amnesty International, which fortunately do not have these restrictive points. However, they do have certain limitations. For example, they pay little attention to organizing demonstrations and public meetings or to mobilizing people. However, it is actions like this that are really going to pressure the Latin American governments to halt, if only partially, their repression.

I don't think it is bad to send telegrams and write letters to these governments asking them to stop the repression, to free the



BLANCO: International campaign forced his release from Peruvian jail.

prisoners, to treat them more humanely, or rather, less inhumanely, not to torture them, and so forth. I don't think it is bad to do all this, but I do think that we must not limit ourselves simply to that. We have to try to promote big mass mobilizations too. In any case, I think that despite the limited methods they use, these groups, like the Chile committees, have filled and are filling a very important international role.

On the other hand, groups like USLA have the advantage of not including political points—like support for socialism—that narrow their base, and they also use the method of mass mobilizations. I agree with USLA's approach. I made this clear in my tour across Canada, where there is another group like USLA, the CLA.⁴

I try to encourage that same method in Europe in the sense that I work with any group involved in the struggle against repression in Latin America.

Q. Do you have any suggestions for the defense committees?

A. Yes, there is something more I want to say. Although they do not have the same approach, all these groups should be in better contact with each other; in the first place to exchange information and in the second place to prepare future joint actions.

Another thing I would like to point out with regard to the work done by these groups is that to be able to function better, they must understand the idiosyncracies of Latin Americans. Our countries are not well developed; communication from one coun-

try to another is very difficult. So that means that activities of an international character do not develop to the same extent as in the advanced countries. There is another side to it also: The intensity of our struggles to defend our precarious democratic rights or to defend our standard of living, which is extremely low, means that we do not pay great attention to the struggle for the political prisoners.

That is, we are involved in a struggle; we are imprisoned as a result; we get out of prison; we return to the fight and we are imprisoned again. But when we are abroad, we don't pay adequate attention to the struggle for the political prisoners. I think this is negative; but that's the way it is. It is a reflection of the situation existing in Latin America.

So we don't worry much about this in our countries. And we worry still less about communicating to people outside the country what the repression is like, who is in prison, how they are, and all the other aspects. We pay little attention to the need to inform the outside world about the massacres and tortures. This does not happen in only one country, but in all parts of Latin America.

Nor do we understand how there can be people in the developed countries of Europe and North America who are concerned and who carry out mobilizations, even mass mobilizations, on a matter that we ourselves mobilize so little about. That is not well understood or well known in Latin America.

So I think these groups must find a way to go themselves and gather the information, to find a way to get information on the spot, so that they can become informed of the magnitude of the repression and make it known abroad.

I am speaking from the experience of my entire stay in Europe. Many times people have asked me for information about Latin America and the repression there. Groups from Amnesty International, from the Chile committees, have said to me: Look, you know we are concerned about such-and-such persons. For example, a group from Amnesty in Sweden said to me:

We have decided to take up the case of this professor who is in prison in Peru. They gave us this name but who can we verify it with? We have written to so-and-so and we have not received any answer. We want to know where he is, how he is, to be able to defend him. Who can we write to? How can we do it? Many other organizations are in the same situation.

Tremendous possibilities for solidarity work exist, but there is a lack of information. I don't think we can wait to receive answers to our letters from Latin America. The organizations themselves must go and dig up the information about the terror. □

3. U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, 156 Fifth Avenue, Room 600, New York, New York 10010.

4. Canadian Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, Box 38, Station B, Toronto, Ontario.

Argentine AAA Threatens Actors, Writers

[The following article appeared in the May 3 issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, weekly newspaper of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Argentina).

[The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

On Friday, April 25, at 6 p.m. a bomb exploded in front of the offices of Abril Publishers at Paraguay and Leandro N. Alem streets. When it exploded, a huge number of leaflets flew into the air. The leaflet demanded that a long list of actors, playwrights, journalists, writers, and three members of the Civita family, which owns Abril Publishers—Carlos, César, and Mina—leave the country. If they did not follow this "order," the "Alianza Antiimperialista Argentina" [AAA—Argentine Anti-Imperialist Alliance or Argentine Anticomunist Alliance]—the Triple A, signer of the note—threatened to execute those it had listed.

In addition to the owners of Abril, the list included actors David Stivel, Carlos Carella, Juan Carlos Gené, Sergio Renán, María Rosa Gallo, Luisina Brando, Mabel Manso, Alfredo Alcón. Also the Uruguayan writer Mario Benedetti, along with the journalists and writers Roberto Cossa, Ricardo Halac, Tomás Eloy Martínez, and Carlos Somigliana. Finally there was Osvaldo Granados, who just a few days earlier had resigned as director of the official news agency Telam.

On Saturday, a special office was set up in the federal police building to aid "the condemned" in getting their passports rapidly.

In the afternoon the Comisión Integral [joint committee], led by the Asociación Argentina de Actores [Argentine Actors Association], voted to stay in permanent session. It also declared the union on a state of alert and called for a work stoppage in theaters, movie houses, radio, and television to run from 8 p.m. that day until 7 p.m. Monday, April 28. In addition, the committee sent a telegram to the president of the nation requesting a meeting.

Several groups of actors went to different theaters, ensuring the carrying out of the work stoppage in all theaters where there were members of the organization.

This did not occur in several establishments with members of the Unión de Artistas de Variedades [Union of Vaudeville Artists]—the nucleus of a sector of the casts of variety shows. Their leader, José Marrone, stated that before stopping work

in solidarity, "we have to ask ourselves why those persons are being threatened."

On Sunday a massive work stoppage took place. The Asociación de Actores announced that it would negotiate with the national authorities.

On Monday several meetings took place. The bloc of Radical senators [members of the UCR—Unión Cívica Radical] voted to condemn the threats by the Triple A and to request that parliament investigate them. The CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] issued a press release signed by recording secretaries Adalberto Winer and Casildo Herreras. It pointed out that in a meeting with leaders of the Asociación de Actores "the leaders of the CGT indicated their approval of the condemnation of any type of violence."

Later, statements of condemnation from the Frejuli [Frente Justicialista de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Front for Social Justice, the Peronist parliamentary bloc] and the APR [Alianza Popular Revolucionaria—People's Revolutionary Alliance, a center-left parliamentary bloc] were made public. A press release from the Partido Justicialista [Justicialist party] signed by press chief Demetrio Vázquez said: "The Justicialists condemn the threats that various Argentine artists have received, and the party wants to express its most unqualified solidarity with these individuals."

In the afternoon a big assembly of the Asociación de Actores took place. About 500 persons were in the hall when the board of directors reported that the threatened artists had decided to remain in the country. Deeply moved, those present applauded. The applause turned into a standing ovation when it was announced that María Rosa Gallo, whose name was on the Triple A list, was present.

Senator Stecco, who was present, stated that "as a member of the Justicialist party I condemn threats of this type, made by organizations acting outside the law."

Also present were Congressmen Montenegro and Martijena of the Frejuli, Senator Samanillo of the UCR, and Nicéforo Castellano of the APR.

Messages of support from the Agrupación Gremial de Escritores [Writers Union], the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, the Communist party, and the Asociación de Directores Teatrales [Theater Directors Association] were also read. The Asociación de Actores made public an extensive communiqué.

Finally, it was reported that at 8 p.m. the work stoppage would end and that the actors would remain on a state of alert.

Shortly after the meeting ended, the Sociedad Argentina de Escritores [Argentine Writers Society] reported that three of its members—Berta Solana Macías, Jorge Reboredo, and Juan Carlos Higa—had been kidnapped from a house in Gerli April 25.

On Tuesday, April 29, statements from two newspaper owners' groups were made public. They condemned the threats and made a special point of the fact that the AAA list included three directors of Abril Publishers.

The minister of the interior issued a press release, commenting on the meeting held between several actors and Undersecretary of Institutional Affairs Dr. Héctor Millán, who voiced "the concern of this ministry, as shown in measures directed at the immediate investigation of this type of threats, to prevent them from happening again."

In addition, according to the April 30 issue of *Cronista Comercial*, Raúl Lastiri, president of the Chamber of Deputies, met twice with different artists, advising them not to leave the country "because it would harm the republic."

On the same day, delegations from the Asociación de Actores were received by the general commanders of the army and navy.

An assembly called Tuesday, April 29, by the executive board of the shop stewards committee of the Asociación de Periodistas de Buenos Aires [Buenos Aires Journalists Association] was attended by 150 compañeros. They voted to carry out two-hour work stoppages Friday, May 2, to condemn Triple A threats against various personalities, among them well-known journalists.

In addition, they reported the kidnapping of Ana Buzzetti, editor of the daily *El Mundo*, which had been closed by the government. In view of this fact, the assembly voted to carry out a twenty-four-hour work stoppage the same Friday if there was confirmation of a rumor that her corpse had been found.

The assembly also voted solidarity with the struggle in Villa Constitución* and with compañeros from different unions who had been threatened. A petition for formation of a parliamentary commission to investigate these facts was approved, as was a demand that a doctors committee investigate the report that Dardo Cabo, former editor of *El Descamisado*, and Emiliano Costa, a journalist, had suffered illegal oppression since their recent arrests. Cabo is reported paralyzed and Costa unrecognizable as the result of the punishment they received. □

*Several thousand metalworkers have been on strike in Villa Constitución since March 20. They are striking to win the release of their leadership, who were imprisoned on the basis of an alleged "subversive plot to halt industrial production" in the region.

My Fight Against Deportation From Canada

[Rosie Douglas, a native of Dominica and a prominent Black activist in Canada, has been waging a long struggle against attempts by the Canadian government to deport him. If the Immigration Appeal Board rules against him, he faces immediate deportation to Dominica, a British colony 400 miles southeast of Puerto Rico.

[The Dominican government recently decreed sweeping new powers to repress political dissidents. Douglas's book, *Chains or Change*, about conditions in Dominica, has been banned there. Douglas himself has been banned from all other colonies and former colonies of Britain in the West Indies.

[The following interview was obtained in Toronto on March 3 by Tony Thomas. Thomas is a staff writer for the American revolutionary-socialist weekly, the *Militant*. The interview will be published in two parts. The second installment is scheduled for publication in next week's issue.]

* * *

Question. Why has the Canadian government been so determined to deport you?

Answer. The background to my deportation stems from my involvement in the February 1969 struggle against racial discrimination at Sir George Williams University in Montréal. After the occupation was broken up by the police, I was convicted of participating in an illegal sit-in. They had also charged me with arson and other crimes, but I was acquitted on those charges.

The real focus of that struggle was not only the professor whose racism we were protesting, but also the board of governors of that university, who are the same people who are involved in control of Canadian imperialist exploitation and control of the Caribbean area.

This is important, since many of the Black students involved at Sir George Williams University were from the Caribbean.

Because I was one of the most active in exposing the racism involved in this struggle, and in carrying our defense to people in Canada, the U.S., and the Caribbean, I was made to bear the brunt of the persecution.

All the other foreign students arrested were on student visas. Although they received convictions, their convictions led to paying a small fine. Deportation orders were issued against them as a formality,

Immigration Board Rejects Douglas's Appeal

The Immigration Appeal Board in Québec has rejected Rosie Douglas's appeal against deportation. According to a news release issued May 8 by the Rosie Douglas Defense Committee, the decision was handed down by Judge Jean-Pierre Houle April 28 and communicated to Douglas May 8.

The committee charges that the decision to deport Douglas was an "act of political victimization by the Canadian government." Of the twenty-six students from the Caribbean who faced charges stemming from the 1969 sit-in at Sir George Williams University, he is the only one to face deportation.

The committee points out that if

Douglas is deported, he faces possible death because of repressive legislation passed in his native Dominica in 1974. These laws give the police and ordinary citizens the right to kill anyone suspected of belonging to an illegal organization.

The committee reports that it is taking the "final legal course open to us, which is to appeal to the Federal Court of Appeal." It asks that protests against the decision to deport Douglas be sent to Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario. Copies of all protests should be sent to the committee at P.O. Box 194, Station P, Toronto, Ontario.

but they were dropped.

However, I am a landed immigrant in Canada. When you are a landed immigrant and have a conviction, a deportation order cannot be made against you until the case has been through the appeal courts, if you want to appeal. The judges pointed out openly that they were under pressure to get through with my case quickly so that I could be deported.

Another reason they were rushing the deportation order in my case was because a landed immigrant is eligible for "domicile status"—that is, to apply for citizenship—after five years.

The deportation order was finally issued, one month before I thought I was supposed to be eligible for domicile status. However, I later found out that when the order was made, I had already really been eligible for domicile status for several years.

Q. Your fight has lasted several years. What has made it so complex?

A. The deportation order was issued in November 1972. In June 1973, my appeals [on charges stemming from the sit-in at Sir George Williams University] ended and I reported to jail. I remained in jail until November 1974. Meanwhile I appealed my deportation order.

What made the case so difficult was that a certificate had been issued against me [in May 1973] saying that I was a risk to the

national security. The certificate was signed by Warren Allmand, the solicitor general, and Robert Andras, the minister of immigration. They signed this certificate on the basis of reports they received from the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police—the federal police in charge of political surveillance].

Up to now, nothing has been explained to prove or even to attempt to indicate what evidence was brought against me. This is contradictory to the Canadian Bill of Rights and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Moreover, this certificate meant that I couldn't appeal on humanitarian grounds against deportation, only on legal grounds.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in late January that the government had the right to issue such a certificate against anybody without having to bring evidence.

Now this contradicts the way the government treated me right after I got out of prison.

When I was in Leclerc prison in Montréal, I got involved in a number of programs to improve the conditions of the prisoners. These received support even from the officials in the prison. We drafted a paper together with the other prisoners on prison reform ultimately leading to the abolition of prisons. We also carried out practical projects such as teaching the prisoners how to read and write.

The solicitor general, on hearing a report of what I had been doing in prison, sent his assistant to see me in jail before I left and said he wanted to see me. He phoned me while I was in Toronto after I got out.

He offered me a job working with him in the Ministry of Justice on prison reform. I told him, "I couldn't consider working with you when you have a certificate against me saying that I am a risk to national security."

He said, "That's no problem, it can be waived."

I said that if it could be waived for this job, why not waive it anyway. It was introduced in an unprincipled way and they had no proof. I don't want to work for the government, I want to work with other working people to change society. Anyway, it is my democratic right to work where I please.

Q. What are the latest developments in the case?

A. We went to trial last Tuesday [February 25] without having the certificate withdrawn.

We found out that there was another charge against me saying that I was guilty of "moral turpitude." My crime was that after the deportation order had been issued in November 1972, I made a trip to the United States and the Caribbean to take part in discussions and to educate people about our case.

The government said that the deportation order meant that I couldn't leave.

So the interesting thing about that was that my lawyers and I said, well, if this man is charged with moral turpitude, we demand the right to bring character witnesses forward to prove there is nothing immoral about me.

That created an opening.

We were able to bring in character witnesses from the Black community to testify how I had been working in the Black community over the years and had been involved with students, how I had worked with the prisoners, and how I had been involved in an unselfish way working with Black women domestic workers in Montréal as far back as 1963.

This testimony included statements from whites, including some of my former professors. It included a signed and sworn affidavit from John Rodriguez, a prominent member of Parliament and a leader of the New Democratic party, the Social Democratic party in this country. There was also a statement on my behalf from Tommy Douglas, a former leader of the NDP.

We also discovered another legal question. We found that under the Canadian citizenship act, a landed immigrant can apply for citizenship before having been a landed immigrant for five years.

Every year you come to the country on a

student or tourist visa counts for six months as a landed immigrant after you win landed-immigrant status. In my case I had been here for seven years as a student before I received landed-immigrant status.

That means I had achieved three-and-a-half-years credit toward getting domicile status and citizenship. That means that after being here for two and a half years in 1969 I was eligible for domicile status. This is despite the fact the government claimed I was not eligible for domicile status in 1972 because I had been a landed immigrant for one month less than five years.

So we are fighting it out on this issue.

The third ground on which we are fighting is on the question of the certificate, which I have already explained.

When I was sentenced I was sent to a reception center to determine whether I would be sent to a minimum, maximum, or medium security prison. This is supposed to be decided on your background, your temperament, and your record.

Most of the other inmates there thought I would go to a maximum security prison, since I had a certificate saying I was a risk to national security.

However, I began talking with both the inmates and the people who worked at the reception center. I talked to them about being victims of capitalism. I also talked to them about the national oppression of Québec, since in this jail both the workers and the inmates were predominantly Québécois.

So after all the IQ tests and everything like that, they kept me there for not just the usual six weeks but for twelve weeks to make sure their recommendations were correct. They recommended that I go to a minimum security prison. They said there was nothing dangerous about me at all.

Two days before I was to be sent to the reception center, they sent someone down from Ottawa who said that I couldn't go to a minimum security prison, that I had to go to a maximum or medium security one. Collectively the staff at the reception center sent a letter to Solicitor General Allmand protesting that their objections had been overruled.

The Black community and other organizations took up the cause and wrote the minister. The minister responded that I had been convicted of arson.

My lawyers checked the files and saw that I had never been convicted of arson. All I was convicted of was participating in an allegedly illegal sit-in, the type of thing that Martin Luther King, Jr. and other people like that had called for.

Even after a trial in which the judge and one of the jurors made openly racist statements, even after the propaganda the press and others put out that the students at Sir George Williams had been responsible for burning a computer, they acquitted

me and the others of arson and all the serious charges.

So we point out that if this was wrong, and it is part of the files given to the solicitor general to justify my being categorized as a security risk, then the whole thing is wrong.

The fourth legal point we are trying to make is that the prosecutor told the judge in my case that he was duty bound to accept the orders of the government's political executive on this and that was all.

We say that this is illegal, just like Watergate. Nixon, Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell, and the others said they were above the law, said that they could persecute anyone who stood in their way with no reference to democratic rights.

We say that the politicians are subject to the law. By this attempt to convict, deport, and repress me, these politicians are breaking the laws, especially the Bill of Rights.

Q. How do you assess the significance of your case?

A. The importance this case has is that it comes at a time when the Canadian government is trying to whip up a frenzy over immigration of people from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. It is trying to make the workers think that the economic difficulties they face come from Black and other immigrant workers. It comes at a time when the government is trying to whip up racism.

They are striking at me because I am seen as one of the most outspoken defenders of Black rights in this country, as well as one who has exposed Canadian manipulation, exploitation, and oppression in the Caribbean. But the whole thing is aimed at all immigrants, all Blacks, and in a larger sense against all working people.

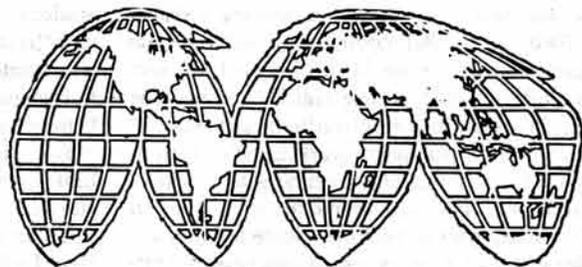
We know this case won't be won in court. It depends on the struggles waged in my defense in Canada, the U.S., the Caribbean, and other parts of the world. This is why I am continuing this case.

We know the government might try to make me take my appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. They think this could cool the case off for a year or two. Then they might try to arrest me again and force me to apply for bail. Since I am on parole they might revoke my parole or prevent me from traveling.

This is a big danger, since my main source of livelihood is traveling around speaking on universities and campuses, in the Black community, at meetings sponsored by the NDP, unions, church groups, and so forth, speaking about my case and about the very debate on immigration policy that the Canadian government claims to be calling for.

[Next week: "On the Need for a Revolutionary Party in the Caribbean"]

AROUND THE WORLD



Lon Nol's Final Payoff

Former Cambodian President Lon Nol hung on in Pnompenh until his government agreed to pay him \$1 million to get out of the country. This information was made public at a news conference held at a refugee camp in California May 7 by Saukham Khoy, who took over for a short time as head of the Pnompenh government.

Lon Nol, who is now living in a \$101,500 house in Honolulu, has confirmed through an associate that the National Bank of Cambodia moved on April 1 to transfer the \$1 million to his account with the Irving Trust Company in New York.

The former president denies that he has additional millions stashed away in Swiss banks.

Jobless California Field Workers Ask Ford For 'Refugee' Status

Unemployed workers on skid row in Sacramento, California, want Ford to designate them as refugees and build a tent city as he has done for arriving Vietnamese.

"Tent cities look beautiful to us," said one unemployed field hand. "If we could get a tent city and a field kitchen, we'd be all set." They sent a telegram to Ford May 6 asking for help. It read:

"We are without work, housing, medical

care and food. We are not eligible for welfare, and we are seeking the same Federally supported aid being given to Vietnamese classified as refugees."

Education Minister's Attack Boosts Sales of Québec Teachers' Manual

An instruction manual prepared by the Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec, the Québec teachers union, for use on May Day has been assailed as "subversive" by the province's education minister—and has become a best seller as a result.

The introduction to the manual says that teachers should ensure that "the majority of pupils, who are children of workers, come to understand the interests of the working class.

"With such an understanding they will be prepared, once they are on the labor market themselves, to organize to defend their own interests."

The projects described in the manual have been scaled for use by different school grades. Grade 1 and 2 pupils, for example, would make up lyrics for a song celebrating May Day. They might also visit a picket line of a nearby strike.

High-school students would study the meaning of words such as lockout, injunction, and scab.

A sample problem for a mathematics class is the following: The net profit of a copper mine in 1972 was about \$25 million. The company employs 300 workers. If the company had been content to realize a net profit of \$10 million in 1972, how much of a wage increase could have been given to each worker?

There is even an English project for the French-speaking students, in which they would learn the words to "Casey Jones the Union Scab," a song by Joe Hill.

The manual quickly became the center of controversy when Education Minister François Cloutier rose to denounce it in the National Assembly. The opposition Parti Québécois, a nationalist party, said it liked some of the manual, but not all of it. The parliamentary leader of the right-wing Social Credit party proposed that parents accompany their children to school May 1 to ensure that the pupils were not indoctrinated with Communist ideology.

Meanwhile, the teachers union has an-

nounced that a first printing of 30,000 copies sold out, and that after Cloutier's attack a second press run had to be ordered.

Saudi Arabia Bans Birth Control

An April 28 decree has banned contraceptives in Saudi Arabia. Anyone bringing birth-control pills or other contraceptive devices into the country is liable to a six-month prison sentence.

The government justified the ban on the basis of a World Muslim League ruling that "birth control was invented by the enemies of Islam."

In addition to these theological concerns, officials connected with the \$60 billion state development plan have pointed to the acute shortage of labor in the country.

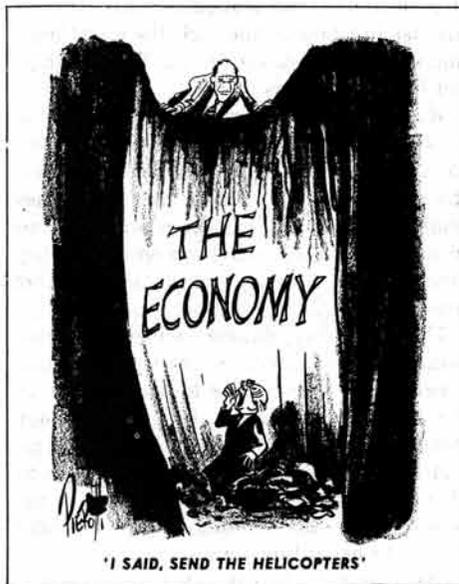
Christian Democrats Hold Secret Congress in Chile

The Chilean Christian Democratic party, which supported the right-wing military coup of September 1973, has violated the junta's ban on political parties by holding a clandestine national congress inside Chile. According to a report in the April 19 *Le Monde* the party, embittered by its failure to gain a powerful voice after the overthrow of Allende, denounced the Pinochet junta as a "right-wing dictatorship with certain fascist characteristics."

Vietnamese Given Ovation In Paris May Day Parade

Participants in the traditional May Day parade in Paris this year were estimated to number between 50,000 and 100,000. The leaders of the major trade-union federations, which organized the parade, sought to give it a strictly "trade union" character, with no political overtones save for a few slogans in support of the "Common Program" of the Union of the Left.

Nonetheless, there were substantial contingents of students, immigrant workers, rank-and-file soldiers, and women's liberation activists. A highlight of the march was the large contingent of Vietnamese. They marched amid a forest of red silk flags decorated with gold stars, chanting rhythmically to the beat of a gong, "Thang-loi, Thang-loi" (Victory, Victory). The Vietnamese were given a "triumphal ovation" by



"I SAID, SEND THE HELICOPTERS"

Pierotti/New York Post

bystanders, *Le Monde* reported.

There were also contingents of marchers from Greece, Chile, and the Association of North African Muslim Students in France. The latter carried a banner commemorating the tenth anniversary of the death of Mehdi Ben Barka, the Moroccan rebel leader murdered in France.

The Young Communists marched behind French flags and photos of Jacques Duclos, the recently deceased French Stalinist leader.

The sectarian and ultraleft groups held their own demonstrations during the morning. The march called by *l'Humanité Rouge*, a Maoist grouping, attracted between 2,000 and 3,000 persons; another demonstration held at the same time by *Lutte Ouvrière, Révolution!*, the Parti Communiste Révolutionnaire (Marxist-Leninist), and an anarchist organization drew about 10,000.

The Trotskyists of the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire*, the French section of the Fourth International, marched in the mass trade-union demonstration. There were no incidents between their contingent and the bureaucrats' marshaling squads, *Le Monde* said.

Pinochet Orders 'Shock Treatment' to Curb 400 Percent Inflation

The Chilean junta called April 25 for "renewed sacrifices" on the part of the Chilean people to stem the country's economic crisis. The program, which the government calls "shock treatment," includes an additional 10% income tax, an increase in property taxes, and a new cut in government jobs. Public spending is to be reduced 15 to 25%.

Chilean workers are already making steep sacrifices. Inflation hit almost 400% last year and averaged 20% a month for the first three months of this year. According to official figures, unemployment is reaching 15%.

A limited number of public-works jobs—mostly digging ditches and cleaning streets—have been made available on an emergency basis, but so far there have been few takers. The jobs pay less than the \$23 a month minimum wage.

The number of beggars in the streets of Santiago has risen dramatically. The government has attempted to dismiss this sign of economic stagnation as a conspiracy of "political origin, destined to create a general sensation of poverty."

Television Comes to South Africa

After banning television for years on the grounds that it was morally corrupting, the South African government reversed its position in 1971. The first test transmission took place this year on May 5.

When regular transmission begins next January, the moral corruption will affect

only four million persons out of a total population of twenty-two million; programming will be limited to English and Afrikaans, the languages spoken primarily by South Africa's white minority.

What is worrying officials of the state-backed South African Broadcast Corporation, however, is that only about 10,000 television sets have been sold since they went on the market early this year.

Price more than Puritanism seems to be the reason: a twenty-six-inch color television set costs at least \$1,550 in South Africa. One can be rented for \$52.92 a month. In addition, television users must pay at least \$100 for an antenna and \$52.92 a year for a television license.

For the eighteen million Black South Africans, even if they could afford a set and wished to watch programs in English or Afrikaans, television's corrupting influence does not appear imminent. Most areas where Blacks are permitted to live do not have electricity.

Inquiry Into \$4 Million Payoff by Gulf Oil Focuses on Bolivia

Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia have been suggested as the countries where political figures may have accepted a \$4 million bribe from Gulf Oil Corporation. Information that a bribe of this amount had been paid to an "unnamed country" emerged following secret testimony by Gulf Chairman Bob R. Dorsey before the United States Securities and Exchange Commission.

All three governments demanded confirmation or denial of whether officials of their countries were recipients of the bribes.

On May 6, Venezuela threatened to order the Mene Grande Oil Company to "suspend its activities" unless Gulf clarified within forty-eight hours whether the bribes were paid to Venezuelan officials. Gulf has a controlling interest in Mene Grande.

The following day Bolivia threatened to stop payment on \$78 million it had agreed to pay Gulf in compensation for properties nationalized in 1969.

Several hundred students at the University of San Andrés in Bolivia held a demonstration, staging a mock wake around a coffin representing "Government morality."

Gulf denied that bribes had been paid to officials in either Venezuela or Ecuador. In the case of Bolivia, the company pleaded ignorance, saying it would have to "investigate" the matter.

On May 10, Gulf informed the Bolivian government that it had not paid any bribes in Bolivia. It also said, however, that the company was "unable at this time to give assurances that Bolivia was not involved in political contributions from Gulf."

This response seemed to satisfy Bolivian President Hugo Banzer, who said his government was not planning to open an



BANZER: Sees no need for further investigation into Gulf Oil bribe.

investigation. "We must assume that the politicians who preceded us were honest," he said.

Others have pointed out that about \$3 million of Gulf's "political contributions" were made after 1966—the last year Bolivia had an election.

Washington Hints at Change In Stance on Blockade of Cuba

A formula that would lead to the lifting of the trade embargo on Cuba later this year was discussed at the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, meeting in Washington early in May.

Kissinger told reporters May 10, "We're coming to some understanding of how to proceed," but refused to give any details. It is "better to leave a little room for secret diplomacy," he said.

Under present procedure, a two-thirds vote would be required to lift the eleven-year-old sanctions. At an OAS meeting in Quito, Ecuador, last November, only twelve of the twenty-three other governments (Cuba is currently suspended) voted to lift the ban. Washington abstained on the motion. Since then, the Ford administration has apparently made known its willingness to allow amendment of the 1947 Rio treaty so that only a simple majority would be necessary to remove the sanctions.

Las Camisas Plateadas Perdieron su Brillo en Minneapolis

Por Farrell Dobbs

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "How the Silver Shirts Lost Their Shine in Minneapolis" aparecido en *Intercontinental Press* el 14 de abril.

[La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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[La siguiente selección¹ proviene del capítulo once de *Teamster Politics*, libro pronto a aparecer por Farrell Dobbs. El libro es el tercer volumen de una serie de cuatro.² Los primeros dos volúmenes relatan la historia de cómo se transformó la International Brotherhood of Teamsters (Hermandad Internacional de Conductores) durante la década de los treinta de un sindicato artesanal a ser la organización obrera más grande de los Estados Unidos. Este crecimiento fue encabezado por una organización combativa de conductores en Minneapolis, bajo la dirección de veteranos del movimiento trotskista.

[Dobbs, persona clave en la organización inicial de los conductores de carreteras, describe en este tomo la expansión del sindicato a un área de once estados; la falsedades inventadas por el FBI e inspiradas por los patrones en contra de los organizadores de los transportistas; la política del sindicato de conductores de Minneapolis y del Partido Laboral-Campesino; las luchas de los desempleados y la persecución de sus dirigentes.

[Aparte del interés histórico que representa el relato hecho por un participante, la selección tiene valor por su descripción de la forma en que se combatió una formación fascista incipiente bajo la dirección trotskista en una ciudad norteamericana en 1938.

[Debe ponerse atención especial a dos aspectos políticos de la lucha que parecen haber sido virtualmente olvidados o reconstruidos erróneamente por los militantes preocupados ante la amenaza que represen-

tan actualmente los grupos incipientes fascistas.

[1. Los trotskistas en Minneapolis no cometieron el error de tratar de comprometerse por sí solos en una confrontación física con los fascistas o con la policía destacada para ayudar a los fascistas.

[Aislados del movimiento obrero, tal medida sectaria o aventurera hubiera ocasionado bajas innecesarias y, por su debilidad, hubiera envalentonado a los fascistas.

[El papel que tenían que desempeñar los trotskistas, tal como ellos lo vieron, era el de comprometerse en la movilización de los obreros, por medio de sus sindicatos, contra el peligro fascista. Solamente una acción poderosa de las fuerzas obreras organizadas podía impedir el intento de consolidación de los fascistas en la ciudad.

[2. Los trotskistas en Minneapolis no cometieron el error de llamar a violar el derecho democrático de la libertad de expresión proclamado por los fascistas.

[Tal como lo vieron los trotskistas, el problema de la libertad de expresión no estaba en juego. En un movilización fascista importante, lo que está en juego es el uso de violencia física, por parte de los fascistas, en contra de sus oponentes, como una medida encaminada a destruir al movimiento obrero, instalar una dictadura totalitaria, y acabar con todos los derechos democráticos. Las manifestaciones fascistas, hechas con el propósito de movilizar y organizar fuerzas reaccionarias, van más allá de la libertad de expresión, situándose en el terreno de la preparación del ataque violento contra el movimiento obrero.

[Por lo tanto, los trotskistas de Minneapolis no iniciaron ninguna campaña para restringirle el derecho de expresión a nadie, sino que buscaron movilizar las fuerzas dentro del movimiento obrero para enfrentar a los fascistas en el terreno en que éstos querían dar la lucha o ya habían empezado a darla en otras partes de los Estados Unidos tales como Jersey City, Nueva York y Los Angeles.

[El punto central era enfrentar las demostraciones fascistas de fuerza por medio de contramanifestaciones. Esto también es un derecho democrático.

[Eso fue lo que trataron de hacer los trotskistas en Minneapolis; el éxito que tuvieron puede ser juzgado por el relato de Dobbs.

[Se puede decir inclusive, que León Trotsky, en aquel entonces exilado en

México, tuvo un gran interés en estos desarrollos y consideró la acción llevada a cabo en Minneapolis, tal como acciones similares en otras partes de los Estados Unidos en aquella época, una evidencia alentadora en el sentido de que los obreros norteamericanos no tendrían que pasar por la experiencia cruel y sanguinaria de una dictadura fascista.]

* * *

Las luchas entre el capital y la clase obrera en épocas de crisis social tienden a estimular la actividad entre los demagogos políticos de mentalidad fascista. Preven que la intensificación de la lucha de clases traerá como resultado que sectores de la clase dominante desechen la democracia parlamentaria y sus métodos de gobierno, y acudan al fascismo como una manera de mantenerse en el poder y proteger sus privilegios especiales. Cada uno de los aspirantes espera ser escogido como el "fuehrer" que dirigirá al movimiento terrorista necesario para el ataque asesino contra la clase obrera que implica tal cambio de política, por parte de la burguesía.

Varios de estos candidatos a Hitler, de hecho, se presentaron en este país a principios de la década de los treinta, pero tuvieron poco éxito durante el período marcado por el ascenso turbulento del CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations—Congreso de Organizaciones Industriales]. Luego, durante los años de 1937-38, la situación empezó a cambiar. Un segundo desplome económico profundo empezó a desarrollarse, señalando el colapso del "New Deal" de Roosevelt. Las contradicciones sociales en general se agudizaron al mismo tiempo que la clase dominante se preparaba para sumergir al país en la guerra imperialista. Los falsos dirigentes burocráticos en los sindicatos no guiaron a los trabajadores por un camino que resolviera las dificultades causadas por estos sucesos—la formación de un partido laboral independiente. Bajo esas circunstancias, un número importante de elementos desmoralizados de la clase media de las ciudades, granjeros empobrecidos y, hasta cierto punto, trabajadores desempleados, fueron presa de los demagogos ultraderechistas.

Como resultado, varios grupos profascistas que habían surgido anteriormente empezaron a crecer rápidamente, recibien-

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2. Los dos volúmenes que ya han sido publicados son *Teamster Rebellion* (1972) y *Teamster Power* (1973), ambos publicados por Monad Press. (Los libros de Monad Press son distribuidos exclusivamente por Pathfinder Press, Inc., 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. También pueden ser conseguidos en Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL.)

do, al mismo tiempo, un apoyo financiero por parte de los intereses antiobreros de los ricos. Envalentonados por este nuevo apoyo, se volvieron más agresivos y al mismo tiempo más provocadores. En algunos casos estos grupos organizaron guardias de asalto uniformadas que públicamente realizaban ejercicios militares; ya fuera que estuvieran uniformados o no, este tipo de pandilleros eran movilizados en campañas terroristas dirigidas inicialmente a los objetivos más vulnerables, aunque básicamente destinadas contra el movimiento obrero organizado.

Los judíos fueron los primeros en ser atacados. Igual que en Alemania Nazi, los convertían en víctimas expiatorias en un esfuerzo para intensificar los prejuicios en contra de ellos, teniendo como objetivo principal dividir a la clase obrera. Pero no eran las únicas víctimas.

Militantes obreros aislados eran detenidos y golpeados en Nueva York y en otras ciudades del este. Los mítines callejeros de los grupos de izquierda eran atacados dispersándolos. En Jersey City el famoso alcalde Frank Hague organizó ataques pandilleros contra reuniones sindicales y piquetes; y en Nueva Orleans los hampones rompieron una huelga del sindicato de conductores. Tal como los eventos posteriores lo probaron, las fuerzas ultrarreaccionarias, que rápidamente centraron sus ataques en su principal enemigo—las organizaciones de masas y la clase obrera, llevaron a cabo estos ataques en beneficio de los capitalistas.

El General Drivers Union, Local 544 [Sindicato General de Conductores, Local 544] le puso especial atención a uno de estos grupos profascistas, los Silver Shirts of America [Camisas Plateadas de Norteamérica]. Este grupo fue fundado en 1932 por William Dudley Pelley, que estableció sus oficinas generales en Asheville, Carolina del Norte, y publicaba un órgano semanal llamado *Liberation*. Concediéndoles tácitamente jurisdicción sobre las grandes ciudades a otros grupos ultraderechistas, Pelley centró sus fuerzas en la organización de los pueblos y las áreas agrícolas. Aunque los logros fueron pequeños en esa esfera durante los primeros años, los Silver Shirts al fin empezaron a obtener resultados.

Aparentemente esto condujo a un sector de la clase patronal en Minneapolis a interesarse en el movimiento; Pelley fue alentado a que mandara a uno de sus asistentes, Roy Zachary, a la ciudad en el verano de 1938 para iniciar una campaña organizativa. Se llevaron a cabo dos reuniones seguidas, el 29 de julio y el 2 de agosto, en el Royal Arcanum hall. Estos dos eventos no fueron públicos, la admisión se hizo únicamente bajo invitación.

A pesar de que todo lo hicieron en secreto, los trabajadores del sindicato de conductores ya se habían percatado de la llegada de Zachary a Minneapolis al cual mantuvieron

bajo constante vigilancia. Se supo de antemano sobre las planeadas reuniones y se hicieron los arreglos necesarios para obtener información sobre lo que ahí pasó.

Así se supo inmediatamente que el principal tema que había tratado Zachary era el de organizar un ataque por medio de pandillas contra las oficinas generales del Local 544.

También se supo que se distribuyó propaganda en ambas asambleas invitando a los participantes a que se incorporaran al "Associated Council of Independent Unions" [Consejo Asociado de Sindicatos Independientes] de F.L. Taylor. Por cierto, Taylor ya había mostrado sus inclinaciones fascistas cuando, unas semanas atrás, se había propuesto organizar un grupo fascista bajo el nombre "Minnesota Minute Men." Por lo tanto era totalmente lógico para él asociarse con los Silver Shirts cuando éstos llegaron.

Poco tiempo después, otro hecho ominoso fue revelado por el rabino Gordon, oponente religioso al fascismo, que también había estado observando de cerca las acciones de Zachary. Gordon informó que George K. Belden, jefe de Associated Industries, había asistido a ambas reuniones de los Silver Shirts.

Cuando la prensa le interrogó al respecto de esta información, Belden dijo a un periodista del *Minnesota Leader*: "Simpatizo con la idea de desembarazarnos de los bandoleros. . . ."

Viéndolos en su conjunto, estos desarrollos aumentaban la terrible amenaza que se cernía sobre el sindicato de conductores. El sindicato esquirol, que había demandado ante la corte al Local 544,³ ahora estaba unido a los Silver Shirts; el papel que desempeñaba Belden mostraba que los patronos estaban directamente involucrados en este reciente complot antisindical; y se hablaba de llevar a cabo un ataque armado contra las oficinas generales del sindicato de conductores.

Esta situación demandaba contramedidas inmediatas. De esta manera, el Local 544, actuando con su acostumbrada firmeza, respondió a la amenaza organizando una guardia de defensa sindical en agosto de 1938.

El *Northwest Organizer* reportó la formación de la guardia. Un comunicado de prensa anunciando la medida fue entregado

3. La demanda mencionada aquí fue hecha por cinco miembros de "Associated Council of Independent Unions" en contra de la dirección oficial del Local 544. Sin la más mínima evidencia, los demandantes acusaron a los dirigentes del Local 544 de transacciones financieras sospechosas y de "conspirar a favor de la limitación de la libre competencia." El Local 544 montó una vigorosa campaña de defensa en contra de esta demanda y la amenaza de intervención que ésta implicaba. El capítulo 10 de *Teamster Politics* relata esta demanda más detalladamente.—IP

a los diarios, que le dieron bastante publicidad. Las funciones del nuevo organismo fueron descritas en el reporte: "Defensa de los piquetes del sindicato, de las oficinas generales y de los miembros contra la violencia antisindical." Por medio de este comunicado el local sindical notificaba al público que se encargaría de su propia defensa, sin confiar en la policía para su protección.

Los dirigentes sindicales sabían perfectamente bien que los funcionarios capitalistas en el poder no sólo tienden a hacerse de la vista gorda ante el bandolerismo de los fascistas; sino que con frecuencia alientan y encubren ese tipo de ataques extralegales contra los obreros. Y no sólo eso. Sus esbirros, la policía, condonan y protegen las actividades fascistas, son reclutados por esos movimientos y, cuando se hace uso de la violencia contra el movimiento obrero por lo general se hacen los desentendidos. Este tipo de comportamiento tuvieron las "fuerzas de la legalidad y el orden" capitalistas en Alemania, Italia y otros lugares; la historia nos enseñó que la situación no sería diferente en los Estados Unidos.

Un problema imperioso tenía que ser resuelto por los trabajadores. Si su intención era defenderse, tendrían que hacerlo por medio de su propia organización. En ese sentido la acción vanguardista del Local 544 de formar una guardia de defensa sindical no sólo sirvió a sus necesidades propias—la medida mostró el camino a seguir a los sindicalistas en todo el país.

Como concepto, la guardia no se veía como un organismo reducido a un sólo sindicato. Más bien se concebía como el núcleo alrededor del cual se pudiera construir el más amplio movimiento único de defensa. Desde el principio se tomaron medidas para comprometer a otros sindicatos en el proyecto; también se esperaba que con el paso del tiempo y de los eventos fuera posible ampliar este frente único incluyendo a los desempleados, las minorías nacionales, la juventud—a todas las víctimas potenciales del fascismo, de sus bandas u otros reaccionarios.

Por estas razones el aparato de defensa no se creó como parte oficial del Local 544. En vez de eso, se inició por miembros dirigentes del local, que actuaban con el consentimiento general de los miembros. Un proceso espontáneo de reclutamiento se desató a través de toda una serie de reuniones con grupos de obreros. De esta manera la base principal de la guardia fue formada rápidamente por el General Drivers Union; y después de eso sus filas se extendieron, incluyendo miembros de otros sindicatos de la ciudad que estaban de acuerdo con la idea.

Desde ningún punto de vista la guardia era un cuerpo elite. Simplemente era una formación eficiente abierta a todo sindicalista activo. Los únicos requisitos para ser

admitido a sus filas eran disposición a defender el sindicato de cualquier ataque; disposición de llevar a cabo el entrenamiento necesario y aceptación de la disciplina democrática necesaria en una unidad de combate. Además, sus actividades eran llevadas a cabo sólo con el consentimiento de los miembros de los sindicatos comprometidos en esto y bajo su control.

La guardia funcionaba democráticamente en sus asuntos internos de la misma manera que el Local 544 lo hacía. Todas las medidas que se llevaban a cabo para cumplir con su cometido se decidían por medio de la libre discusión y mayoría de votos. Este procedimiento también se utilizaba para seleccionar a los dirigentes los cuales serían la autoridad en caso de algún combate.

Ray Rainbolt, miembro del personal del Local 544 fue nombrado comandante general del organismo de defensa. Su record era impresionante. Aparte de su amplia experiencia en la dirección de luchas sindicales, también tenía bastante conocimiento militar adquirido durante su servicio militar en el ejército de los Estados Unidos.

Los que fueron escogidos como oficiales menores de la misma manera se habían probado en la lucha de clases y habían obtenido reconocimiento como dirigentes medios en el sindicato. Igualmente la base de la guardia tenía el temple adquirido en los combates de la lucha de clases. Viendo al organismo en su conjunto, éste se componía de bastantes veteranos militares que habían adquirido diferentes aptitudes en las fuerzas armadas. Entre ellos había tiradores expertos, ex ametralladores, ex operadores de tanques, etc. Bastantes habían sido suboficiales; uno había sido oficial de cuerpo de señales y otro, inclusive, había sido oficial en el ejército alemán.

El grupo se estructuró en pequeñas unidades para facilitar una rápida movilización en caso de que se presentara un ataque sorpresivo contra el movimiento sindical. La norma era que las brigadas fueran de cinco, cada una con un miembro designado como capitán. En un período relativamente corto aproximadamente 600 personas se organizaron en esta fuerza.

A los miembros de la guardia se les dieron pequeños emblemas para usar en la solapa que decían "544 UDG" y se les sugería que los usaran siempre. Cuando estaban de servicio usaban brazaletes claramente marcados "544 Union Defense Guard" [Guardia de Defensa Sindical 544], para que se identificaran. Esta designación fue pronto adoptada por los demás sindicatos, que eran parte de la guardia, porque se dieron cuenta que usar ese número tan prestigiado, 544, le daba al nombre un significado mayor.

La organización recolectó sus propios fondos—para adquirir equipo y cubrir

gastos generales—patrocinando bailes y otros eventos sociales. Parte del dinero se usó para comprar dos pistolas calibre .22 y dos rifles calibre .22 para que los miembros de la guardia tuvieran la oportunidad de mejorar su puntería. Se llevaron a cabo reuniones de práctica con este propósito; además se prepararon ejercicios periódicos para el entrenamiento en tácticas defensivas.

Los miembros de la guardia no fueron armados por los sindicatos, puesto que en aquellas circunstancias esto los hubiera hecho vulnerables a las celadas y provocaciones de la policía. Sin embargo, muchos de ellos tenían armas en sus casas, que usaban para la cacería; y ésas fácilmente podrían haber sido utilizadas en caso de su tuviera que rechazar un ataque armado de las pandillas de los Silver Shirts.

En las sesiones de entrenamiento, se dieron conferencias sobre las tácticas usadas en el pasado por las pandillas antiobreras en este país y las de los fascistas en el extranjero. Después hubo discusiones para definir las medidas defensivas para rechazar un ataque de esa naturaleza.

También se formó un departamento de información secreta. Su función era vigilar la literatura y actividades de los fascistas y de los antisemitas, la propaganda de los esquiroleros, y cuestiones por el estilo. Un incidente en especial ilustra gráficamente el alcance del brazo informativo, así como la eficiencia de la guardia en acción. Sucedió cuando los Silver Shirts trataron de llevar a cabo otra reunión en la cual arengaría el mismo Pelley.

El día en que se iba a llevar a efecto el acto, un taxista transportó a Pelley a una residencia del distrito aristócrata de la ciudad. El chofer reportó inmediatamente esto a Rainbolt, que telefonó a la residencia y advirtió que Pelley tendría problemas si llevaba a cabo sus planes. Para que se diera cuenta de que no era una baladronada, Rainbolt dirigió una sección de la guardia al Calhoun Hall, donde se iba a efectuar la reunión esa noche. La llegada de las fuerzas laborales hicieron que los asistentes se fueran de prisa, y el demagogo nunca llegó. A eso de la medianoche otro taxista llamó a Rainbolt para informarle que acababa de dejar a Pelley en la estación de Milwaukee a tiempo para que abordara el tren a Chicago.

Después de ese incidente el sindicato de conductores tomó otro paso calculado para asustar aún más a los enemigos de los sindicatos. Este se dio en forma de un aviso especial publicado en la portada del *Northwest Organizer* el 29 de septiembre de 1938. El aviso daba instrucciones a todos los capitanes de la guardia de defensa de mantener sus brigadas a toda su fuerza para ser movilizadas y estar listas para entrar en acción sin previo aviso.

La maniobra pareció haber tenido el

efecto deseado, puesto que los Silver Shirts trasladaron su siguiente mitin a la vecina ciudad de St. Paul. Este se verificó el 28 de octubre en el Minnehaha Hall, y estaba bien protegido por la policía. El principal orador fue Zachary. Según informes en los periódicos del día siguiente había alardeado:

"Los dirigentes de 544 han dicho que no podemos efectuar mítines en Minneapolis, pero los llevaremos a cabo, con la ayuda de la policía. La policía sabe que algún día va a necesitar de nuestro apoyo, es por eso que nos está apoyando ahora."

Los conductores tomaron la posición de Zachary en serio por varias razones. En el evento de St. Paul podía estar en juego algo más que el simple esfuerzo para levantar la moral de los elementos profascistas por medio de un mitin exitoso. Parte del ardid pudo haber sido tratar de presionar a las autoridades de Minneapolis para que se les otorgara una protección policiaca igual en esa ciudad; si ése era el plan, entonces era muy probable que en esta maniobra estuviera involucrada Associated Industries.

Actuando bajo este supuesto, el alto mando de la guardia de defensa sindical decidió hacer una demostración de fuerza pública. Esto tenía dos propósitos: dejar bien claro una vez por todas que los Silver Shirts no iban a operar en Minneapolis sin una lucha dura y, al mismo tiempo, probar la eficacia de la guardia en el curso de tal acción.

Con esas miras en mente se llamó a una movilización de emergencia a la guardia de defensa con sólo una hora de previo aviso. Sólo tres personas sabían de que se trataba. Como parte de la prueba se les dejó a los demás con la impresión de que se había desarrollado una verdadera crisis. Cuando llegó la hora designada para la asamblea, sólo sesenta minutos después de que se dio aviso, alrededor de 300 miembros de la guardia habían llegado dispuestos a la acción—fue impresionante su actuación.

La movilización se efectuó en un lote vacante en el centro de la ciudad, para que mucha gente pudiera ver lo que estaba sucediendo. Una vez que los hombres se habían reunido ahí, Rainbolt explicó que había sido una operación de práctica para hacerles otra advertencia a los Silver Shirts y los patronos que los apoyaban. Una discusión científica se llevó a cabo sobre los resultados de la prueba.

Ya que todo tipo de planes que tenían los miembros de la guardia para esa noche habían sido arruinados, una poca de diversión era necesaria para compensar. La guardia marchó en una columna—mostrando abiertamente los brazaletes—a un burlesque del centro, donde toda una sección de asientos había sido reservada.

Con respecto a los ultraderechistas, parecía que habían entendido perfectamente

bien las intenciones del sindicato. Zachary no volvió a intentar llevar a cabo reuniones en Minneapolis; la propaganda fascista disminuyó gradualmente; poco después fue evidente que el intento organizativo de los Silver Shirts había sido abandonado.

A pesar de este giro favorable en la situación, la guardia de defensa sindical fue mantenida para asegurarse de cualquier resurgimiento de la amenaza fascista. Sin embargo, la naturaleza de sus acciones sufrió un cambio. Prácticas de tiro y ejercicios militares disminuyeron. Gradualmente las funciones de la guardia viraron

principalmente a defender los picnics del sindicato y otros eventos sociales grandes. Por medio de despliegues públicos ocasionales de este tipo se les recordaba a las fuerzas antiobreras de que el organismo de defensa aún existía.

Haciendo un balance, vemos que el Local 544 no solamente se defendió contra otro ataque capitalista. La experiencia con los Silver Shirts les dio a muchos de sus miembros un mejor entendimiento de la necesidad de la autodefensa obrera, y los mejores militantes obtuvieron una visión más profunda en las leyes de la lucha de clases. □

Vietnam: Una Victoria para Todos los Oprimidos

[La siguiente es una traducción de la declaración del Comité Nacional del Socialist Workers Party adoptada el primero de mayo en una reunión en Nueva York.

[La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

La clase obrera mundial celebra en este Primero de Mayo la victoria histórica de los rebeldes vietnamitas, que han logrado expulsar de su país el último contingente de las fuerzas armadas del imperialismo.

El Socialist Workers Party (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores) aclama esta victoria, que ha llegado después de décadas de lucha heroica contra una sucesión de potencias imperialistas. El triunfo es una poderosa reafirmación de lo que significa el Primero de Mayo para el movimiento obrero: solidaridad mundial con todos los oprimidos. Esta solidaridad se expresó poderosamente en el movimiento internacional antibélico, encontrándose en los Estados Unidos el sector más fuerte de este movimiento donde los revolucionarios norteamericanos jugaron un papel clave.

La victoria de los vietnamitas inspirará a los pueblos del mundo colonial y semicolonial que están luchando por su liberación nacional del dominio económico y político del imperialismo.

Es una victoria para todos los que están luchando contra la opresión y la explotación.

Durante casi diez años la guerra del Sudeste Asiático había sido el eje central de la lucha entre el imperialismo y la revolución mundial en ascenso. Los gobernantes norteamericanos decidieron contener la revolución en Vietnam por medio del poder militar norteamericano y el establecimiento de gobiernos contrarrevolucionarios en Vietnam del Sur. Querían mostrarles a los pueblos de las áreas coloniales y semicoloniales que aplastarían al que intentara enfrentarse al imperialismo norteamericano

no. Pero a pesar de que la poderosa maquinaria bélica de los Estados Unidos golpeó año tras año a este pequeño país, no pudo derrotar la resistencia popular.

La política de Moscú y Pekín retrazó por mucho tiempo la victoria del pueblo vietnamita. En 1945, después de la derrota del imperialismo japonés, el Vietminh tomó rápidamente el poder. Sin embargo, según los acuerdos de Stalin en Yalta y Potsdam, Indochina debería permanecer en la "esfera de influencia" imperialista. El Vietminh, cuyos líderes habían sido entrenados en la escuela stalinista, aceptaron el reingreso de las fuerzas imperialistas, que inauguró una nueva etapa de la guerra.

Después de que los franceses fueron derrotados por el Vietminh en 1954, tanto Moscú como Pekín presionaron a los vietnamitas para que aceptaran la división de su país y la creación artificial de Vietnam del Sur como "país," esta vez bajo el amparo de Washington.

Desde el inicio de la escalada guerrera de Washington, Moscú y Pekín se rehusaron a proveer a los rebeldes vietnamitas con la ayuda material necesaria. Tampoco tomaron la iniciativa de organizar acciones de masas internacionales en su defensa. Che Guevara condenó esta traición en 1967 cuando señaló que los vietnamitas estaban "trágicamente solos" en su lucha y señaló que además de la culpa del imperialismo norteamericano "son de la misma manera culpables aquéllos que en el momento decisivo vacilan en hacer de Vietnam parte del territorio socialista inviolable. . . ."

Esta traición tomó su forma más descarada en la primavera de 1972, cuando Nixon brindaba en Moscú mientras llevaba a cabo un bombardeo brutal, minaba los puertos y bloqueaba Vietnam del Norte. Fue bajo esta presión que los vietnamitas fueron forzados a aceptar en los acuerdos de 1973 la continuación de la presencia del régimen títere de Thieu.

Pero a pesar de estos obstáculos, que

incrementaron enormemente el precio en sangre y sufrimiento que el pueblo vietnamita tuvo que pagar, sus aspiraciones revolucionarias los impulsaron hacia adelante.

Movimiento Internacional

La resistencia heroica de los vietnamitas contribuyó a promover la radicalización de una generación de jóvenes en todo el mundo. Se desarrolló un movimiento internacional antibélico, con cientos de miles de manifestantes que inundaron las calles de los Estados Unidos y de ciudades como Tokio, Melbourne, Londres, Berlín, la Ciudad de México y París.

La brutalidad del ataque militar del Pentágono reveló ante todo el mundo hasta donde era capaz de llegar Wall Street en su intento de mantener y extender el sistema capitalista. Se asesinaron a millones de vietnamitas. Un millón de camboyanos, la séptima parte de la población, murieron o fueron heridos. Se devastaron los campos de Vietnam, Camboya y Laos.

Los gastos exclusivamente militares para efectuar esta matanza y destrucción se estiman en 400,000 millones de dólares. Perdieron la vida más de 56,000 soldados norteamericanos.

Entre más se profundizaba el compromiso militar de los Estados Unidos, y ascendía internamente el costo económico y social de la guerra, los gobernantes hallaban cada vez más difícil utilizar los viejos argumentos anticomunistas para justificar su brutalidad. En cada ocasión se exponían más como descarados mentirosos.

Washington volcó toda su autoridad política y militar en Vietnam, sin embargo, los estrategas de la Casa Blanca cometieron un gran error. Subestimaron la determinación del pueblo indochino de deshacerse del dominio extranjero y su capacidad de alcanzar esa meta. Y subestimaron el profundo sentimiento antibélico del pueblo norteamericano y su capacidad de poder ver los verdaderos objetivos del gobierno a pesar de sus mentiras.

De esta manera, la derrota de los imperialistas es algo nuevo. Es la primera guerra de estas proporciones que la potencia imperialista más fuerte del mundo, los Estados Unidos, ha perdido. También es la primera guerra que ha causado el surgimiento de un movimiento de masas antibélico dentro de los Estados Unidos. Es este patente sentimiento antibélico que dejó a la Casa Blanca sin más remedio que aceptar su derrota y retirarse a una nueva línea de cerco a la revolución colonial del Sudeste Asiático.

El Presidente Ford y otros en los círculos dominantes se lamentan por el surgimiento de lo que llaman "aislacionismo." Están tratando de convencer al pueblo norteamericano de que apoye el "internacionalismo"

de una fuerza policiaca mundial, de los B-52, de guerras secretas y de organizaciones tales como la OTAN y la CIA.

Sin embargo, la oposición del pueblo norteamericano a las aventuras militares imperialistas no es un "aislacionismo." Todo lo contrario. Es parte del internacionalismo de todos los oprimidos y explotados del mundo entero que tienen un interés común en la lucha contra un enemigo común.

Como resultado de la educación política del pueblo norteamericano obtenida por la guerra y el movimiento antibélico, se han restringido las opciones de los policías del capitalismo internacional. Ahora tienen que tomar en cuenta la muy probable oposición de las masas norteamericanas—inclusive los soldados—a cualquier nueva operación militar de los Estados Unidos destinada a sostener dictaduras amenazadas por rebeliones populares.

Ya no pueden confiar en que el pueblo norteamericano se someta pasivamente a la defensa del imperialismo bajo la bandera del anticomunismo. Tal como actualmente lo muestran todas las encuestas, el pueblo norteamericano no sólo se opone a la intervención en Vietnam sino también en otras áreas del mundo.

El movimiento antibélico jugó un papel crucial en este cambio de conciencia política de los Estados Unidos. Este movimiento empezó hace diez años con una pequeña minoría de la población. Pero conquistó a la mayoría del pueblo norteamericano.

El Papel del SWP

El Socialist Workers Party se enorgullese del papel que jugó en la dirección y la organización del movimiento antibélico de los Estados Unidos. Desde un principio, el SWP reconoció la importancia de este movimiento al cual le dedicó sus energías.

En el *Militant* del 22 de noviembre de 1965, Fred Halstead, dirigente del Socialist Workers Party y prominente organizador antibélico, predijo el curso que seguiría el movimiento antibélico:

"Está totalmente dentro de las posibilidades que no solamente unos cuantos cientos de miles, sino que millones de norteamericanos se comprometerán activamente en la lucha contra la guerra de Vietnam. Un movimiento de ese alcance, aunque se centre solamente en la demanda en contra de la guerra, tendrá los efectos más profundos en todas las estructuras sociales del país, incluso en los sindicatos y los soldados del ejército.

"Lo más probable es que también resulte en el ascenso general de la conciencia radical en muchos otros aspectos, así como ya ha tenido su impacto contra el anticomunismo. Pero sobre todo, podrá ser el factor clave que obligue a terminar la guerra genocida del Pentágono en Vietnam. Las

vidas de miles y miles de hombres, mujeres y niños vietnamitas y de soldados norteamericanos depende de esto. Eso en sí mismo es razón suficiente para hacer a un lado las diferencias sectarias para unirnos y participar en la construcción de una organización nacional que pueda abarcar a cualquiera que esté dispuesto a oponerse a la intervención norteamericana en Vietnam, sin importar su posición o falta de ella respecto a otras cuestiones."

Este conocimiento del significado e impacto del movimiento antibélico guió las actividades del Socialist Workers Party durante el transcurso de la guerra. Vimos el fortalecimiento de este movimiento como nuestra principal tarea.

La Perspectiva para Vietnam

¿Qué perspectiva se abre para los vietnamitas con la derrota de la intervención de los Estados Unidos?

El pueblo vietnamita ha luchado por más de treinta años por la liberación social y nacional. Esta incontenible lucha—generada por las condiciones de vida intolerables de las masas campesinas y obreras—tuvo su primer gran impulso con la derrota en Vietnam del imperialismo japonés al finalizar la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Continuó después de la guerra, primero contra Francia y luego contra los Estados Unidos.

Esta lucha por la liberación nacional contra la dominación imperialista estaba íntimamente vinculada a las luchas populares contra la represión y el oneroso impuesto, por la reforma agraria y otras luchas sociales.

Los dirigentes de las fuerzas de liberación vietnamitas en repetidas ocasiones compararon su lucha con la lucha revolucionaria de hace dos siglos de las colonias norteamericanas contra la Gran Bretaña.

El paralelo es válido, pero a diferencia de la guerra de independencia norteamericana, que ocurrió cuando el capitalismo estaba en ascenso como sistema mundial, la revolución vietnamita ocurre cuando el sistema capitalista mundial está en su agonía mortal. La lucha por la liberación nacional ha sido en Vietnam la lucha *contra* los países capitalistas más poderosos y sus regímenes títeres y, por lo tanto, tiene una lógica y potencial anticapitalista.

Las clases capitalista y terrateniente nativas habían sido tan atrofiadas por la dominación imperialista del país que siempre habían sido totalmente dependientes del imperialismo para su sostén. Esto quiere decir que la lucha en contra del capitalismo extranjero también ha sido una lucha contra sus agentes nativos y sus contrapartes.

Con la derrota del ejército de Saigón, y con las opciones de Washington severamente limitadas por el sentimiento antibélico en

los Estados Unidos, existe ahora la posibilidad objetiva de lograr lo que por tanto tiempo ha sido el objetivo de la unificación nacional y la autodeterminación de Vietnam. También existen las condiciones objetivas para una revolución social que abole totalmente el sistema de explotación de la propiedad privada.

Las necesidades de las masas de trabajadores y campesinos de Vietnam se enfrentan irremediablemente a los intereses de los terratenientes y capitalistas y a su maquinaria militar, que apoyaban al gobierno títere creado por los Estados Unidos. Para llevar a cabo tareas tales como la reforma agraria, reducción de los impuestos y la reunificación del Norte con el Sur es necesario un gobierno de obreros y campesinos.

La sublevación en Vietnam del Sur y el desmoronamiento del gobierno títere de Saigón han llevado al Gobierno Provisional Revolucionario más allá del programa que ha planteado de "reconciliación" con el ahora ya derrumbado régimen de Saigón. Es imposible la "reconciliación" con las fuerzas capitalistas y terratenientes que aún quedan sin ir en contra de los deseos e intereses de las masas de campesinos y trabajadores.

Después de años de sufrimiento y de guerra, las masas vietnamitas merecen el fruto total de su victoria. La próxima tarea es la unificación con el estado obrero de Vietnam del Norte y la instauración de la democracia proletaria. Un gobierno basado en soviets siguiendo el ejemplo de la Revolución de Octubre de 1917 en Rusia inspiraría a las masas en todo el Asia y en todo el mundo y avanzaría de manera considerable la victoria del socialismo a nivel mundial.

Esta es la perspectiva que apoyamos nosotros como socialistas revolucionarios mientras que celebramos las victorias que se han logrado en Vietnam. □

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A Discussion With Trotsky on Latin American Questions

[On November 4, 1938, a discussion was held in Trotsky's home in Coyoacán, Mexico, on Latin American topics. Stenographic notes were taken, which have never been published up to now. In the extracts below, all of Trotsky's remarks have been retained. The contributions of some of the others have in certain instances been shortened or left out.

[It should be noted that the language used by the participants was English and that Trotsky did not correct his remarks, that being one of the conditions of his participation in the small educational meetings organized from time to time by his guards and secretaries.

[Charles Curtiss, an American Trotskyist, who opened the session with a report, had worked with the Mexican section of the Fourth International in earlier years. Sol Lankin was an American guard in the household. We have been unable to determine the identity of "Robinson." He may have been one of the guards or a visitor.]

* * *

Trotsky. Some of our comrades have proposed a general discussion upon the political situation in Mexico and Latin America in view of the return of Comrade Charles. The discussion will be of a general character with the sole view of informing our comrades of the situation.

Curtiss. The last few days have been very busy for me in trying to get some clarity and unity into my notes. . . . I am more acquainted with the local situation in Mexico than I am with the rest of Latin America.

It appears to me that comrades in Mexico, in Puerto Rico, in Cuba, and in other regions, as much as I have been able to observe, have an extremely mechanical approach to the problems of permanent revolution. They take an idea, tear it out of its context, and I think that this in part gives rise to some of the difficulties you have heard about in the Mexican situation.

Mainly it is a misunderstanding of the question of skipping over stages. The literature of the revolutionary movement is posed mainly from the point of view of the industrially advanced countries and only understood in the light of the industrially advanced countries. For example, this question of skipping over stages is posed like this for the Mexican comrades: Why

can't we in Mexico skip over intervening stages and arrive directly at the stage of proletarian revolution?

No attempt is made to look upon the movement from the point of view of accomplishing the democratic tasks. They are not used to thinking in that fashion, and this I believe gives rise to many misunderstandings.

One question, for example, is the relationship in Mexico between the liberal bourgeoisie and our movement, the Fourth International. When an attempt is made to correct the Mexican comrades, they pose the abstraction of the permanent revolution and then come back with the claim: "Comrade Trotsky is reneging on his principles in regard to Mexico because of his desire to safeguard his exile." This is not always expressed openly but it lurks in the back of the minds of the comrades.

It is not very difficult to argue against this, utilizing the case of China, as it is somewhat similar. In the case of the other countries with semicolonial problems, our attitude is generally the same. The comrades there are not particularly well-read or interested in these problems. What they are interested in is what strikes them immediately.

An explanation is necessary about the relationship between our movement and the general democratic movement. Emphasis should be placed upon the study of each concrete case, not upon abstractions only but upon each concrete case. For example, if socialism were achieved in the United States, it would be possible for all countries to skip these intermediate stages. Each special circumstance will have to be taken into consideration and an attempt made to telescope them into a shorter space of time.

Trotsky. On the question of permanent revolution in colonial countries—

Curtiss. Just a minute if I may—I would like to emphasize one more question. The misunderstanding on the part of leading comrades on this concrete question gives rise to difficulties and obstacles that make it practically impossible to approach the mass movement in Mexico, to approach the movement of the people generally.

Trotsky. Yes, I believe that Comrade Curtiss is right. The question is of tremendous importance; and schematicism of the

formula of permanent revolution can become and does become from time to time extremely dangerous to our movement in Latin America.

That history can skip stages is absolutely clear. For example, if a railroad is built through the Yucatan jungles, it is a skipping of stages. It is on the level of American development of roads.

And when Toledano¹ swears by Marx, that is also a skipping of stages, because the Toledanos of Europe in the time of Marx swore by other prophets.

Russia skipped the stage of democracy, not totally, but compressed the stage. The fact is well known. The proletariat can skip the stage of democracy, but we cannot skip the stages of the development of the proletariat.

I believe our comrades in Mexico and other countries attempt abstractly in respect to the proletariat, even in respect to history generally, to skip—not with the masses over certain stages—but over history generally, especially over the development of the proletariat.

The working class of Mexico participates, cannot help but participate, in the movement, in the struggle for the independence of the country, for the democratization of the agrarian relations, and so on. In this way the proletariat can come to power before the independence of Mexico is assured and the agrarian relations are reorganized. Then the workers' government can become an instrument in order to resolve these questions.

It can occur; possibly it will occur. But it is necessary to lead, to guide the workers—issuing from the democratic tasks to the taking of power. Not to pose an abstract socialist dictatorship to the real needs and desires of the masses, but starting from these daily struggles to oppose the national bourgeoisie on the basis of the workers' needs, winning the leadership of the workers and gaining the power.

Latin American society, like every society—developed or backward—is composed of three classes: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, and the proletariat.

1. Vicente Lombardo Toledano, the class-collaborationist head of the Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM—Mexican Workers Confederation). He played an active part in the slander campaign against Trotsky carried out by the Mexican Stalinists as part of the preparations to assassinate the exiled Soviet leader.

Insofar as the tasks are democratic in a large historical sense, they are bourgeois-democratic tasks, but the bourgeoisie here is incapable of resolving these democratic tasks, as the bourgeoisie was incapable in Russia or in China.

In that sense, during the struggle for the democratic tasks, we oppose the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. The independence of the proletariat even in the beginning of this movement is absolutely necessary, and we especially oppose the proletariat to the bourgeoisie in the agrarian question, for that class will rule in Mexico as in every Latin American country which has the peasants. If the peasants remain in support of the bourgeois class, as is now the fact, then it will be such a semidemocratic, semibonapartistic state as now exists in every country of Latin America, with inclinations toward the masses.

This is the period in which the national bourgeoisie searches for a bit more independence from the foreign imperialists. The national bourgeoisie is obliged to flirt with the workers, with the peasants, and then we have the strong man of the country orientated to the left as now in Mexico.

If the national bourgeoisie is obliged to give up the struggle against the foreign capitalists and to work under the direct tutelage of the foreign capitalists, then we have a semifascist regime, as in Brazil for example. But the bourgeoisie there is absolutely incapable of creating democratic rule, because on one side stands imperialist capital, on the other side they are afraid of the proletariat because history there skipped a stage and the proletariat became an important factor before the democratic organization of the whole society.

Even in these semibonapartistic-democratic governments the state needs the support of the peasants and through the weight of the peasants disciplines the workers. That is more or less the situation in Mexico.

Now the Fourth International recognizes all the democratic tasks of the state in the fight for national independence, but the Mexican section of the Fourth International is in competition with the national bourgeoisie before the workers, before the peasants. We are in permanent competition with the national bourgeoisie as the only one leadership which is capable of assuring the victory of the masses in the fight against the foreign imperialists.

In the agrarian question we support the expropriations. That does not signify, of course, that we support the national bourgeoisie. In every case where it is a direct fight against the foreign imperialists or their reactionary fascist agents, we give revolutionary support, preserving the full political independence of our organization, of our program, of our party, and the full freedom of our criticism. The Kuomintang

in China, the PRM² in Mexico, and the APRA³ in Peru are very similar organizations. It is the people's front in the form of a party.

Of course, the people's front in Latin America does not have so reactionary a character as in France or in Spain. It is two-sided. It can have a reactionary attitude insofar as it is directed against the workers; it can have an aggressive attitude insofar as it is directed against imperialism.

But in our appreciation of the people's front in Latin America in the form of a national political party, we make a distinction from France and from Spain. But this historical difference of appreciation and difference of attitude can be permitted only under the condition that our organization doesn't participate in the APRA, Kuomintang, or PRM, that it preserves absolute freedom of action and criticism.

The questions of the conquest of power and of socialism should also be concretized. The first question is the conquest of power by the workers' party in Mexico and the other advanced Latin American countries. The second question is that of building socialism. Of course, it would be more difficult for Mexico to build socialism than for Russia. Yet it is not at all excluded that the Mexican workers may conquer power before the workers of the United States if the workers of the United States continue to be as slow as they are now. I will say that it is especially possible if the imperialist movement in the United States pushes the bourgeoisie to domination over Latin America [presses the bourgeoisie in its drive for domination over Latin America]. Latin America is for the United States what Austria and the Sudeten were for Hitler.

As the first step of the new stage of American imperialism, Roosevelt or his successor will show the fist to Latin America in order to assure their economic-military tutelage over Latin America, and that will provoke a more decisive revolutionary movement, as in China—we believe

2. The ruling party founded in 1928 by Gen. Plutarco Elías Calles under the name of Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR). General Cárdenas, who stood in the left wing of the PNR, reorganized the party along the lines of a people's front in 1938, renaming it the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana (PRM). Towards the end of the Cárdenas presidency, a shift to the right occurred in Mexican politics, which accelerated in the following years under Pres. Manuel Avila Camacho. In 1946 the name of the party was changed once again, this time to Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the name it still retains.

3. Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, a Peruvian party organized by Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre when he was residing in Mexico in 1924. At one time Haya de la Torre proclaimed sympathies for the Russian Revolution and visited the Soviet Union, where among others he talked with Trotsky.

with more success. Under these conditions the workers of Mexico can come to power before the workers of the United States. We must encourage them in this direction.

But that does not signify that they will build their own socialism. They will resolve to fight against American imperialism and they will, of course, reorganize the agrarian conditions of the country and abolish the perfidious and parasitic society which plays a tremendous role in these countries, giving the power to the workers and peasants soviets and fighting against the imperialists. The future will depend upon events in the United States and the whole world.

Curtiss. As Comrade Trotsky was speaking, many questions that comrades ask one another over all Latin America and many parts of the world arose in my mind.

Let us discuss the case of Mexico. There are two problems that are connected. At the start of the labor movement here, I believe when Morones⁴ was the most important figure, the argument of Morones was that it would be possible to conquer power in Mexico but that the workers could not dare do so because of the inevitable military intervention of the United States.

No matter what his own opinion was about the necessity of socialism, Morones took care of himself first of all.

Now we find theoretically posed in *El Popular*, Lombardo Toledano's paper, the reverse of the same problem. And there was one article in *El Machete*, the Stalinist organ, which I did not study extremely carefully, similarly posing the question as to whether or not it would be possible to achieve socialism in Mexico or achieve the conquest of power peacefully. I am conscious that the workers give quite a bit of thought to this question. It is posed in many articles. The new socialists are all intrigued with this idea.

The actual path toward the conquest of power seems to take the form of union control. The union struggles for control. The butchers, for example, have threatened to go out on strike in order to gain control of the slaughterhouses. The railroads are under workers' administration.

I don't know exactly what the situation is in the petroleum industry, but here are some of the reports. That in the mansion formerly owned by a representative of the oil company, the representative no longer lives there. Instead a trade-union bureaucrat occupies his place.

The question of democracy, it appears to me, not only is a question of state form, but a burning question within the labor movement. A concrete problem that our com-

4. Luis N. Morones, general secretary of the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana, a conservative trade-union federation modeled after the American Federation of Labor.

rades in Mexico face is how to meet the bureaucracy. I thought the trade-union bureaucracy in the United States was pretty bad, but I think they are just taking lessons from the Mexican bureaucracy. An iron hand is welded. If the members do not obey, they are excluded. The advance of our movement hinges on that particular question.

There is a bureaucracy of the state and also a bureaucracy of the unions, and in many respects they are not so very far apart in Mexico. That is a problem in both spheres that is becoming very acute.

I think the concrete application of the transition program to Mexico will have to take into account these laws and these backgrounds. Attempts at workers control, attempts to democratize the trade-union movement. I think it is necessary to issue a slogan of armed workers militia, not only against the bourgeoisie, but to defend the conquests they themselves have already made from the trade-union bureaucrats.

On the question of winning over peasants. Here we find that the schoolteachers seem to play a key role. . . . The schoolteachers, along with the railroad workers, are the connecting link between the peasantry and city workers.

Two questions I would like Comrade Trotsky to comment on: One, our attitude toward the petroleum expropriation and arising bureaucracy and the attempt of the bureaucracy to place part of the burden on the workers; and, two, the exact reason for the swing leftward on the part of Cárdenas—why the swing is so decisive, and why so deep, because of all the presidents, Cárdenas seems to have gone farther in facing the land problem than any other.

A note on the APRA. It is an important organization but subsidized at the present time by the Mexican government. One of the chief arguments of the APRA and of the leaders of the APRA, and I think this is a question not only for the comrades of Latin America but also for us in the United States, is this: They claim there is no chance or no use in attempting to have anything to do with the workers of the industrially developed countries because they are not interested in colonial problems.

I think the attempt by comrades of the Fourth International in industrially advanced countries to face the problems of the colonial and semicolonial countries would be a strong blow against the argument of the APRA.

Lankin. I would like a little more information about the Mexican organization. How many members it has and what the composition of the party is. What publications, etc.

Curtiss. It is difficult to determine the

exact number. It is in a stage of reorganization.

Social composition: Composed of two levels, schoolteachers and workers. The workers are in the main of the building trades, not industrial workers but building-trades workers.

The official publication is a newspaper, the *Fourth International*. It has a very good circulation. The group has done a great deal of publishing but very little of it is sold, most of it is distributed.

Of course, *Clave*, a new theoretical magazine, is very sympathetic to our point of view.

From the point of view of theory there is a big gap in the organization. The schoolteachers are well-read in Marxism. Most of the other comrades know very little about Marxism from a theoretical standpoint. Some attempts have been made at education with some success in the cities, but it was not carried out on a national scale.

Lankin. You said before when you spoke about the unions that if you disagree with union leaders you can be taken off the job. Would a leader in the Mexican unions have full power in the sense of a government official over that particular group of workers, or do they have the same democracy they are supposed to have in the United States?

Curtiss. In all Latin American countries, the constitutions of the trade unions are perfect models of democracy, but the leaders carry on dictatorial practices. All unions have all sorts of guarantees, but these guarantees don't mean a thing.

A leader can expel anyone from the union, and the expelled member finds himself in a very, very disagreeable position. No attempt can be made at appealing the expulsion. The only real appeal would be the appeal of fists.

John L. Lewis, Green, and all our American trade-union leaders like them have nothing on the Mexican trade-union bureaucracy.

Robinson. I would like to ask how the Mexican section of the Fourth International is taking the decision of the conference which was printed in the *Appeal*.⁵ How is

5. The reference is to a struggle that broke out in the Mexican section of the Fourth International between two groups, one headed by Octavio Fernández, the other by Luciano Galicia. The issues remained obscure, neither side proving capable of formulating them on a political level. The problem, in which personal antagonisms appeared to loom high, was taken up at the founding congress of the Fourth International in 1938. A resolution criticizing both groups and suggesting a way out of the impasse was adopted by the congress. The resolution was published in the *Socialist Appeal*, a name used for a time by the *Militant*.

the Communist party growing recently? Is it having success? Is it growing stronger? How do we stand in relation to the CP?

Curtiss. The Communist party is a powerful organization in Mexico. It controls many public offices. When our comrades deliver literature to the post office, if it falls into the hands of the CP, it will never get to its destination.

The Stalinists of Mexico are making a drive for a total of 75,000 members. In the United States they are making a drive for 100,000 members. From this you can get an idea of the organizational strength of the CP. From the point of view of members, it is a powerful organization. However, it is wrong to look upon them as an unbreakable mass. . . .

The decision of the International Congress was taken very, very poorly by the comrades in Mexico City, especially the Galicia group. It has given rise to many tendencies, and we may be left with a much smaller organization than we figure now. The decision was taken very badly by these comrades. They agreed to submit to the decision but only under protest. The motion to accept under protest was passed with only a few comrades voting against.

* * *

Trotsky. Regarding the estimate of membership of the Communist party in connection with its campaign for 75,000, I am very doubtful. Political statistics in Mexico are not the most exact in the world. For example, the CTM gives out as its membership, a million. When I asked a former official of the CTM if this were true, he replied:

"No, it is exaggerated."

"How many, a half million?"

"No, I believe forty or fifty thousand, and especially insofar as it concerns workers."

The figures of the Communist party, however, are very, very confused.

Diego Rivera believes, and he knows the situation, that the party is strong in Mexico City. It had, I believe he said, 12,000 and not more than 14,000 members, some 11,600 or 11,700 bureaucrats and 2,000 or 3,000 workers.

In regard to the bureaucrats, they cannot be politically recognized as genuine members of the party. The official leader of the trade union is a Communist. He obliges everyone under him to be a Communist. If they don't attend a meeting, they must forfeit their salary for five days.

The trade unions in Mexico are constitutionally statified.⁶ One cannot obtain a job

6. For more on this subject, see *Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions*, particularly the article "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay." The pamphlet is available from Pathfinder Press, Inc.

if he is not a member of a trade union, and the bureaucratic trade unions receive dues through the state. With a teacher, for example, the leaders decided that every teacher pay 1.5 percent of his salary. The secretary of finances ordered that from their salaries 1.5 percent should be deducted for the trade union.

In the general context of Mexican politics, the trade unions are now at a very interesting stage. We now see a general tendency to satisfy the trade unions. In the fascist countries we find the extreme expression of this tendency.

In democratic countries, they transform the former independent unions into instruments of the state. The trade unions in France are being transformed into an official bureaucracy of the state. Jouhaux⁷ came to Mexico as a representative of his government in order to safeguard the interests of France in Mexican oil, and so on.

The reason for this satisfying tendency is that declining capitalism cannot tolerate independent unions. If trade unions are too independent then the capitalists push the fascists in order to destroy them or to frighten the leaders with a fascist alternative in order to discipline them.

Jouhaux has been disciplined in this manner. He is sure that if he is a better republican, then the French will not establish a fascist regime. We saw in Spain that in the most Anarchistic trade unions the leaders became bourgeois ministers during the war.

In Germany and Italy this is assured in a totalitarian manner, the unions being incorporated directly into the state, together with the owner capitalists. It is only a difference in degree, not a difference in essence.

We see in Mexico and the other Latin American countries that they skipped over most stages of the development. It began in Mexico directly by incorporating the trade unions in the state. In Mexico we have a double domination. That is, foreign capital and the national bourgeoisie, or, as Diego Rivera formulated it, a "sub-bourgeoisie"—a stratum which is controlled by foreign capital and at the same time opposed to the workers; in Mexico a semibonapartist regime between foreign capital and national capital, foreign capital and the workers.

Every government can create in a case like this a position of oscillation, of inclination [tilting or leaning] one time to the national bourgeoisie or workers and another time to foreign capital. In order to have

the workers in their hands, they incorporate the trade unions in the state.

They skip over economic relations also, stages of development in the sense that they expropriated oil, for example, from foreign capital and yet didn't give it to the national capitalists. They don't distribute it or sell it to the Mexican bourgeoisie, especially because they are afraid of the class struggle of the workers, and they give the oil fields to the state.

They create a state capitalism which has nothing to do with socialism. It is the purest form of state capitalism.

At the same time they incorporate the workers, the trade unions, which are already satisfied. They incorporate them in the management of the railroad, the oil industry, and so on, in order to transform the trade-union leadership into government representatives. The foreman is at the same time the representative of the workers, of their interests nominally, yet really the representative of the state over the workers. And he has the right—better to say the possibility—of ruining for the workers their chance to work, because in the name of discipline of the trade unions, he can do it in the interest of production.

In that sense, of course, when we say the control of production by the workers it cannot mean control of production by the satisfied bureaucrats of the trade unions, but control by the workers of their own bureaucracy and to fight for the independence of the trade unions from the state.

In Mexico that is the most important task—the liberation of the trade unions from the tutelage of the bourgeois state and the liberation of the workers from the dictatorship of the bureaucrats in the trade unions. That is workers democracy.

We must underline the fact that now the trade unions cannot be democratic trade unions in the old sense of the word. The imperialists cannot tolerate them. In the old countries as well as in Mexico, they can be instruments of the imperialist bourgeoisie or revolutionary organizations against the imperialist bourgeoisie.

That is why, of course, that we begin in Mexico with slogans—liberation from the state, workers democracy, free discussion, and so on. But they are only transitional slogans, leading to the more important slogans of the workers state. It is only a stage which can give us the possibility of replacing the present directors of the trade unions with a revolutionary direction [leadership].

They cannot be independent as in the good old times, tolerated by the bourgeoisie because it was possible to allow this much freedom to the trade unions. It is no longer possible now to establish the old democracy in the trade unions just as it is no longer possible to establish democracy in the state.

It is an absolutely parallel development.

In Mexico, Toledano utilizes this condition only to assure his domination of the workers as every Latin American state uses it in order to assure its own dominance. It is a semibonapartist rule, inclined now to the left, now to the right. It depends upon the concrete historical stage in every country. But here we cannot skip the stages. We cannot say to the workers, Give us the leadership and we will show you what to do.

It is absolutely certain that the Fourth International is capable of assuring revolutionary direction to trade unions during the transitory stages in Mexico. The Fourth International will defend this Mexican stage against imperialist intervention. It is not as in France, as in the United States. We fight in order to prevent its being transformed into a colony, into slavery.

But as the Mexican section of the Fourth International, it is not our state and we must be independent from this state. In this sense we are not opposed to state capitalism in Mexico; but the first thing we demand is our own representation of workers before this state. We cannot permit the leaders of the trade unions to become functionaries of the state. To attempt to conquer the state in this way is absolute idiocy. It is not possible in this manner peacefully to conquer power. It is a petty-bourgeois dream.

That was Stalin's plan with the Kuomintang, and it was because of this idiocy of Stalin that the Kuomintang now rules China. We will enter the Kuomintang, said Stalin, then we will politely eliminate the right wing, then the center, and then the left. Thus we will conquer power without any trouble.

We of the Left Opposition⁸ pointed out that the right wing of the Kuomintang is imperialist. They have in their hands the army. We cannot conquer power without opposing this machinery. Insofar as we are in the hands of the Kuomintang, we are in the hands of the genuine bosses of the country. Absolutely.

The APRA now affirms that they are the most revolutionary party in Peru. This is only because they are in opposition; but even in opposition they are more cautious than is the administration of Cárdenas.

410 West Street, New York, New York 10014; or from Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL.

7. Léon Jouhaux, the general secretary of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT—General Confederation of Labor).

8. The faction of the Russian Communist party organized by Trotsky in 1923 in opposition to the rising bureaucratic trend that found its leader in Stalin. The Left Opposition was extended internationally, becoming the International Left Opposition in 1930, a faction that aimed at returning the Communist International to revolutionary principles. These efforts failed, as was demonstrated by the colossal defeat of the German Communist party in face of the rise of fascism. The international faction then moved toward the organization of a new worldwide movement to carry on the program of revolutionary Marxism, a step taken in 1938 with the founding of the Fourth International.

Insofar as I can judge the last programmatic letter⁹ of the leader of the APRAists, the party is controlled by leaders who are connected with foreign capital. They are interested, like all the reactionary generals in Mexico, in building a dominating clique as an instrument of foreign capital, in working if possible for the increase of the national capital.

Of course, the interests of foreign capital and national capital are not always identical, and they come from time to time into sharp clashes. Thus it is possible in favorable conditions for the national capital to oppose the exigencies of foreign capital.

During the time of Roosevelt's "good neighbor policy," Cárdenas tested the possibility of military intervention and he succeeded to a certain degree in conquering certain positions, beginning with English capital, then American, and so on. Now it seems that he is beginning to make concessions again. He tested the limits of the possibilities.

The national bourgeoisie needs an inner [domestic] market and the inner market is more or less a satisfied peasantry. That is why the agrarian revolution, especially at the expense of foreign owners, is a direct gain to the national bourgeoisie. The peasants will buy more goods and so on. This policy is of political character. It is not clear at the beginning how far the limits are. The administration cannot say how long the bourgeoisie will tolerate, or how long the American bourgeoisie will tolerate, or how far it can go without intervention from Great Britain, and so on. That is why it is of an adventurist character. From one side probing and from the other jumping, and then a retreat.

I believe that we must fight with the greatest energy this idea that the state can be seized by stealing bits of the power. It is the history of the Kuomintang. In Mexico the power is in the hands of the national bourgeoisie, and we can conquer power only by conquering the majority of the workers and a great part of the peasantry, and then overthrowing the bourgeoisie. There is no other possibility.

The APRA says that there is no use going hand in hand with the workers of the United States because they are not interested in colonial questions, the same with the European proletariat, and so on. The real reason for that attitude is the need for political protection from the White House. It is not an ideological mistake or error. It is a

9. For further evaluation of this letter see "Haya de la Torre and Democracy—A Program of Militant Struggle or of Adaptation to American Imperialism?" and "Ignorance Is Not a Revolutionary Instrument" in the *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-39)*, second edition. The article on Haya de la Torre was dated November 9, 1938, five days after this discussion.

political calculation of the national bourgeoisie of Peru.

They know that they need the confidence of the White House, especially of Wall Street. If they win in Peru, they will need the protection of Wall Street as do all the governments now in Latin America, and if they enter into connection with the workers, to win them for the struggle, that signifies they must break all relations with the White House.

For some time it was difficult for me to get a clear picture of the program of the APRA. But the last letter of the head of the party is absolutely clear. He says that the United States is the guardian of Latin America's liberty; and if a foreign power threatens this liberty, the APRA will immediately call upon the United States, and so on—not a word about the workers.

It is a people's front party. A people's front is included in the party, as in every combination of such nature. Direction is in the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie fears its own workers. That is why this party, although so strong that it could gain power by revolution, is afraid to enter that road. They do not have the courage or the class interest to mobilize the peasants and the workers, and they will

replace them by military maneuvers or by direct intervention from the United States.

Of course, we cannot enter such a party; but we can create a nucleus in it in order to win the workers and separate them from the bourgeoisie. But under no circumstances can we repeat the Stalinist idiocy with the Kuomintang in China.

Curtiss. On the question of the statification of the trade unions, I think an important aspect of that is the National Labor Relations Board set up in the United States which has played havoc with the fighting spirit of the workers.

I think that if we were to characterize the tendency in Mexico—the attempt to achieve a theoretical peace, a peaceful transition to socialism—it could be called a bureaucratic dream of the trade-union leaders, who come into a soft and easy job through this process. That seems to them the acme of development toward socialism.

Trotsky. It would be well to ask our comrades in Mexico to verify the statistics of the Communist party. Diego Rivera estimates 12,000 were in the central drive for 75,000. He is not exaggerating. The Communist party itself credits itself with not more than a total membership of 24,000.

One of Richest Men in the World

Thieu Looks After Himself



BILLIONAIRE THIEU

Miffed at being edged aside during the last days of the puppet regime, Thieu has apparently declined the hospitality offered by his sponsors in Washington. He fled instead to Taiwan. One of his first public appearances there was a pilgrimage to the tomb of Chiang Kai-shek.

Thieu put his eight years as chief U.S. puppet in Saigon to good use, however. He is now one of the richest men in the world, according to Nguyen Van Ngai, Saigon's minister of rural development until he was ousted last year.

"Without doubt, he is a billionaire," said Ngai when interviewed at a California refugee camp. Ngai said he was convinced Thieu had succeeded in removing from the country a substantial portion of South Vietnam's estimated total of twenty-six tons of gold reserves.

"But even without this he would be a billionaire in U.S. dollars," Ngai said. □

FROM OUR READERS

The April 14 issue of *Alternative News Service*, which is published by the Australian Union of Students and distributed to campus newspapers as a source of news, carried a complete reprint of the interview with Dr. Israel Shahak published in the March 31 issue of Intercontinental Press. The interview, entitled "Israel Is About as Apartheid as South Africa," was well received in other countries, too.

Alternative News Service said of Intercontinental Press: "Offers an extremely comprehensive and quality coverage of international affairs from a Trotskyist viewpoint. No other radical publication produced weekly has the same scope or can call on the same resources as IP."

Dr. Israel Shahak sent us a letter from Jerusalem, Israel, thanking us for publishing the interview with him. He enclosed two items from the press showing the degree of racism prevalent in Israel.

The first item, from the supplement of the April 18 *Al-Hamishmar*, ascribes Israel's military victories to the superior intelligence of the Jews. But not all Jews. According to the article, most "Oriental Jews" drop out of pilot training courses at a certain stage. "I have seen that the Negroes have a similar problem."

The racist-minded author agrees that Blacks, like Oriental Jews, can think; but he alleges that they can't think *ahead*. And this, he claims, has been "proven" by "researches made in the USA."

The second item enclosed by Dr. Shahak is from the March 5 issue of *Ha'olam Haze*. We are informed that an "Israeli citizen of Arab descent is not allowed to raise poultry." The Poultry Council refuses to give Arabs either eggs for hatching or chicks. Even if a poor Arab should obtain some turkey chicks, for instance, he would be barred from getting feed at the official price. "So he will find it rather difficult to compete with the settlements in Golan, which obtain all the official preferments to raise poultry."

The discrimination against Arabs in the poultry business is done so skillfully, according to the author of the article, that it does "not allow Israel Shahak to publish more of his stuff."

On the latter point, Dr. Shahak notes, "the writer is mistaken."

Some of the difficulties encountered by prisoners in the United States in such small things as receiving mail is indicated in the

following letter from A.E., who is in a Georgia prison:

"I am very grateful to you for going out of your way to see that I get this subscription to Intercontinental Press. It was truly a revolutionary deed. I was supposed to, before now, let you know that I did get the paper, but being incarcerated has its hold backs; and I've been confronted with a few attempts on my well being.

"Since I'm a noted communist within the institution, the censorship of my mail is very close. Sometimes I get two papers at a time, mostly upon inquiry.

"I must stress here that the Intercontinental Press is the most complete informant I've come in contact with as yet, and it is the most factual.

"The interview with Israel Shahak was a super exposure, and it left me a little shocked, especially the Bar-Ilan University case.

"I must thank you repeatedly for sending the truth of the world and the system in to me. You have eased my bonds.

"In reach for change."

B.M. sent us the following self-explanatory letter from a California prison:

"I have just finished reading my first copy of I.P. and I want to thank you and the person who made it possible for me to receive the I.P.

"It's been a long time since I've been able to read anything that lets me know what's really happening in the world.

"Thanks again."

R.N., a prisoner in Iowa, wrote us that the "Around the World" section of Intercontinental Press "is by far one of the best news briefings on the worldwide revolutionary movements ever to pass my way."

He also commended the December 23, 1974, issue as "very outstanding, and a worthwhile teaching tool."

That was a special 128-page issue featuring documents of the world congress of the Fourth International held last year. The cost for that issue is \$2.50, and well worth it.

J.S., a member of the Young Socialist Alliance in Denver, Colorado, wrote us that he had to work at "various lowly and sordid jobs" to save up enough for a subscription to Intercontinental Press. "Unfortunately, the paper has been arriving either late or not at all recently." He hopes that the inefficiency observable in deliveries was caused by no more than a wrong zip code.

That's now been fixed; so let us know if that satisfied the U.S. Postal Service.

J.S. adds that he "would very much like to correspond with a prisoner" who reads Intercontinental Press. If any prisoner is interested, write us and we will be glad to pass the message on.

The following letter from a pair of readers in Colorado gave us a case of mixed emotions:

"We were given a gift subscription to Intercontinental Press. We are not interested in continuing to receive the paper, so please transfer our subscription to Mike Anderson of Prince Rupert, British Columbia. On pp. 544 of Vol. 13, No. 15 of IP it was suggested that he would like a subscription. Thanks."

People as thoughtful as that really should be readers of Intercontinental Press. Maybe they'll come back in at a later stage as the international class struggle grows sharper.

In reading mail from our readers, we include the envelopes. This attention to detail pays off occasionally. Here, for example, is an item we would like to share with the authorities of the U.S. Postal Service.

R.B. sent us an airmail letter from Pittsburgh renewing her subscription. The Pittsburgh PO stamped the envelope "APR 15 PM 1975." When the letter reached New York, the PO here stamped the back of the envelope "MAY 7 AM 1975."

According to our pocket computer, it took that plane twenty-two days to fly from Pittsburgh to New York.

What we would like to know from the authorities is how they manage to fly a plane that slow. Has a new technological breakthrough been made?

Perhaps it's expenditures on technological advances of that kind that are being passed on in the form of skyrocketing postal rates. New increases have now been scheduled that will hit periodicals and books especially hard, according to reports in the press. The figure ranges up to 251 percent.

More rational planning is in order, in our opinion. For instance, why not ground the superslow jets and reinstate the fast Pony Express? Better for ecology, too. □

Human Toll of Cambodian War

In a May 10 statement broadcast over Phompenh radio, the information minister of the new Cambodian government, Hu Nim, said that 600,000 Cambodians were killed and the same number wounded in the course of the five-year U.S.-backed war in that country.

In just the seven-month period prior to August 1973, some 200,000 persons were killed or maimed.